

Local Government SERVICE

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Beatrice Webb on

RUSSIA AND OURSELVES

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THREEPENCE

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ARE WE READY?

THE interesting articles we publish this month describing the organisation of the after-raid information service in Sheffield, a particular aspect of the parallel service in Brighton, the outstanding achievements of Walsall—to whose work on "blitz education" we paid tribute last month—in organising mutual billeting and demonstrating emergency cooking, and the launching of the first mobile Citizens Advice Bureau, strike an encouraging note for the coming winter. Whatever may be the position of other sections of the national life, it is clear that some local authorities at least have learned and applied the lessons of last winter. When the bombs rain down again—as they surely will—the people of Sheffield, and Brighton, and Walsall will find help of every kind at hand and will be spared the endless trek from office to office, which to many of the "bombed out" last winter was an ordeal even worse—because more prolonged and wearying—than the bombing itself.

All the available evidence suggests that other aspects of the civil defence services have shown a comparable improvement. We read of vastly extended and greatly strengthened shelters, lighted, heated, and supplied with adequate sanitation and more canteens, first-aid posts, games sections, and other amenities, of better organised firewatching, of more efficient reporting, rescue, and first-aid and repair arrangements, and of more comprehensive and efficient plans for dealing with the homeless. How far these encouraging accounts represent a general advance and not merely the isolated achievements of a minority of progressive authorities, the coming months will show.

No Time to Slacken

YET, while local government as a whole can legitimately take pride in the way in which it has tackled and, to a large extent mastered, the most formidable task ever thrust upon it, not a single authority, and certainly not a single officer, can afford to slacken or sit back in the glow of self-congratulation. There is a real danger that the recent lull in air attack will breed—indeed, it has already bred among some of us—that fatal complacency, that insane conviction that "it can't happen here" which had such terrible results in some areas last winter and spring. On any realistic view of the future, we are bound to get, sooner or later, air attacks more concentrated, more widespread, and more intense than anything we have yet experienced. Are we all ready for those attacks and their results—the towns and villages which have not yet heard the whine and crash of a bomb no less than those which have undergone their baptism of fire? Are we prepared—often with shrunken and less well trained personnel—to meet new tactics, new weapons, new devilries, to cope with difficulties and dislocations as yet hardly imagined, to adapt our plans speedily to meet all possible and impossible disasters? Not until we are so prepared can we afford to relax.

Are we, moreover, making the most effective use of the lull to bring every phase of the civil defence services up to the peak of efficiency in personnel, organisation, and flexibility? Can we, each one of us, say with confidence: "If the big attack starts tonight, I am ready; so far as I am concerned, the section of civil defence with which I am connected, whether it be great or small, is fully prepared and as

local authorities and their officers must seek the information themselves, and we strongly endorse the advice of the writer of the Sheffield article, that "there should be a body of observers to attend and report on experience gained in major raids, to ensure that other areas will not be left in ignorance of the latest form of enemy activity." Could not officers themselves, through N A L G O or through their sectional and professional organisations, arrange an observing and reporting corps of this type, to collect and disseminate information and advice on the best ways of dealing with the various air-raid problems? We intend to play our part also by publishing more articles on the lines of those which have appeared in recent numbers—and we appeal to every reader with experience or suggestions which he feels would be of value to his colleagues to let us hear of them.

"Front-line" Tours

ANOTHER way of achieving the same object is by organised visits to raided areas, one example of which was reported in a recent number of the Devon county officers' magazine. On the suggestion of Mr. H. D. Gill, chairman of the Devon county public assistance committee, and of the civilian welfare committee, a party of 40 representatives of local authorities in Devon—councillors and officers—was taken on an escorted visit to a much-raided town and to some of the surrounding villages, where they saw rest centres, emergency cooking plants, and first-aid posts, and heard at first hand just what had happened after the raids and how the hundreds of refugees had been dealt with. This visit covered the welfare side only, but there is no reason why the idea should not be extended to all branches of civil defence. There are, of course, obvious limitations to the idea—no harassed officer is likely to welcome, on the morning after a blitz, the influx of a "Cook's Tour" of sightseeing colleagues from surrounding areas—but the present lull provides an excellent opportunity for organising such visits. Where more official impetus is lacking, could not N A L G O district committees undertake the job?

Reconstruction Committee

THE decision of the National Executive Council to set up a local government Reconstruction Committee with wide terms of reference will be welcomed by all members of N A L G O. When the names of the Committee are published it will, we believe, be recognised that the council has chosen a strong and able team, fully capable of reaching conclusions and preparing recommendations that will do credit to the Association and to local government. Each member is an officer of national standing in his branch of the service and—what is more important—a man capable of taking a wide and unprejudiced view of its needs in the difficult years ahead.

"Ideas Pool" Wanted

THE three articles we publish this month on notable civil defence achievements—and the many more we should like to publish—all emphasise our point, which we have endeavoured, so far almost in vain, to bring home during the past twelve months. They underline the need for a more adequate exchange of information between authorities, for a greater pooling of ideas, for a kind of civil defence clearing house, which will collect and circulate examples of the best practice and organisation from all over the country, so that all may benefit from the enterprise of the more experienced. This is, of course, a task which the various Ministries should have performed themselves. They have no doubt attempted to do it, but, so far as our information and observation goes, the attempt has been half-hearted and unimpressive.

In default of such a scheme from above,

The Committee has a tremendous opportunity. It is, so far as we know, the only body which is looking at the future of local government from the purely administrative point of view. All its members are practical administrators of wide knowledge and experience. It will be able, as could no other group of men, to speak for the local government service as a whole and to advance expert solutions to problems which, hitherto, have been left very much in the hands of the amateur. It will make the officer's voice heard, as it has not been heard in the past and, by that service alone, should make a contribution of outstanding importance to the wider problem of national reconstruction. It is faced with a task of extraordinary difficulty and complexity, and in meeting that task it will, we are sure, have the goodwill of every local government officer.

Glamorgan and Whitleyism

IT will come as a surprise to many N A L G O members to learn from the report of a special meeting of the executive committee of the Glamorgan branch, which we publish on another page, that the biggest and, by its own claim, the most progressive N A L G O branch in South Wales is still not converted to Whitleyism. Yet that would appear to be the case. Despite the wholehearted support of Whitleyism expressed by successive N A L G O conferences, despite the endorsement of that policy by every district committee (including that for South Wales and Monmouthshire), despite the formation two and a half years ago of the South Wales provincial council with the co-operation of thirty local authorities in the area, and despite the united voice of practically every other branch in the country, Glamorgan has hitherto stood aloof and independent.

The meeting we report, therefore, was a landmark in the branch's history, for it adopted a resolution endorsing the principle of Whitleyism, and pledging its support to the South Wales provincial council and to efforts to induce Glamorgan county council to affiliate with that body.

That was progress indeed. But the battle is not yet won. The resolution was adopted by a majority of three votes only—15 to 12—and it has still to be endorsed by an annual general meeting of the branch in December at which, we understand, the "opposition" will bring all their artillery into action.

Why are members of the Glamorgan branch so persistent in refusing to come into line with the rest of their colleagues throughout the country? A number of arguments have been cited, but they all appear to boil down to one—that the branch can do better for itself by direct negotiation with the county council through its joint committee—it has enjoyed that degree of Whitleyism for 20 years—and that so long as that happy condition continues, all other N A L G O members in the district, and N A L G O policy in the country, can go hang. That is an attitude N A L G O has had to fight consistently in the past, but of which, happily, little is heard to-day. We had never expected to find it in South Wales, which has been noted for years for its championship of trade union solidarity. We trust, therefore, that Glamorgan members will emphatically repudiate it when they discuss the question in December.

A Branch "Comforts" Fund

MOST branches now have their "comforts funds" from which they supply knitted goods and other clothing, sweets, cigarettes, games, and the like to their members in the Forces or in enemy prison camps. But few, we fancy, are likely to have accomplished more in this direction than the Kent County Officers Guild, a copy of whose balance sheet for the past year has just reached us.

This shows that, during the twelve months ended July 31, the branch—which has a membership of around 1,100 (many of whom, of course, are in the Forces)—collected no less than £395 in subscriptions and donations. Of that sum, nearly half—£155—has been spent on wool, from which the women members have knitted 1,000 garments. These have been distributed to aerodromes and balloon barrage, searchlight, and other Army units, the crews of six ships, and men in the Fleet Air Arm. The committee has also adopted a trawler, each member of the crew of which has been completely fitted out with woollens. Of the balance of £240, £33 has gone to prisoners of war, in the form of books and other comforts; £52 to the Red Cross; £21 to the Lord Mayor's Air Raid Distress Fund; £30 to Services Funds for men in the Middle East, and smaller sums to a wide range of similar funds and objects, and the committee ended the year with a balance of £36. This is a fine achievement; what have other branches to show by comparison?

Sports Kit for Warriors

LESS satisfactory has been the result of the appeal we made in these columns in August for sports kit for men in the Forces. We suggested that branches should collect this material themselves for their own members and that they should send any surplus to Headquarters, which would then prepare a central pool from which requests which the branches could not themselves supply might be met.

Whether branches have themselves made any progress we do not know; what we do know is that Headquarters has so far received nothing—not even a pack of cards or a set of draughts. It has, however, received a number of moving appeals for material from isolated units of men who have few facilities for recreation of any kind and little money with which to provide their own.

Surely N A L G O members can do better than this. There must be vast quantities of games and sports equipment of all kinds lying rotting in cupboards and garden sheds throughout the country. Why not turn it out now, and if your branch cannot make immediate use of it, send it to Croyde Bay?

M.O.I. Films

IT is refreshing, amid all the criticism to which it has been exposed, to be able to praise the Ministry of Information. Of all its activities, that of the Films Section has been outstanding—largely, no doubt, because it has from the beginning been directed and staffed by experts in the production and use of documentary films, in which this country was particularly rich at the outbreak of war. Practically all the Ministry's films have been first-class, breaking fresh ground and setting new standards in the use of the film as propaganda; and where the section has failed—as it has, until lately, in the depiction of the work of the armed forces—the fault has rested not with it but with the Service departments themselves. We have looked in vain for films of the Battle of France, Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, the hunting and destruction of the Graf Spee and Bismarck, the Middle East campaigns, and such brilliant achievements as those of the Tobruk garrison and the defenders of Malta. Some of these, it is true, have been covered by the news reels, though never adequately, while the Ministry itself has done good work in such pictures as "Britain Can Take It." On the whole, however, it must be admitted that the achievements of our soldiers, sailors, and airmen have, until lately, been poorly reflected on the screen. "Target for To-night," that fine picture of a bombing raid on Germany recently shown throughout the country, marks a new departure and, we hope, the beginning of a new policy.

On the home front, on the other hand, the

Ministry has done grand work, and some of its films on evacuation, wartime education, the work of the war factories, and the production and use of food, may well become historic records of life in Britain at war. Nevertheless, we are still awaiting a real survey of civil defence—a home front achievement as fine as anything in the nation's history.

Schools in Wartime

IN the production of pamphlets, the Ministry has been less happy. Too many have been cast in that mould of fatal complacency, that attitude of glossing failure and magnifying success, which so nearly led to Britain's defeat a year ago; while even the good ones have had a totally inadequate circulation. How many readers of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE have seen a single Ministry pamphlet other than those circulated to every household? Expensively produced pamphlets are of little use if few people—and those the very folk who need their information least—ever see them.

These comments are prompted by one of the latest of the Ministry's productions devoted to "The Schools in Wartime." This is an admirable piece of work, well and simply written, lavishly illustrated, and effectively got up. It tells the story of the great evacuation, deals briefly with the difficult problems of billeting, schooling, and adaptation of the evacuated children, sums up the results of the experiment, and touches on camp schools and the maintenance of education of children left in the target areas. As a piece of propaganda it should be useful—if it reaches the right people—though many education officers may feel that the picture it paints is unjustifiably rosy.

Why is it, incidentally, that the evacuation scheme has had more publicity, in film and picture, than any other aspect of civil defence? And can we hope that, having now covered the subject pretty considerably, the Ministry will turn its attention to other aspects of the wartime work of local government?

A United Church?

A FACTOR which must be disturbing many thinking people today is the relative failure of the churches to rise to the needs of a nation at war. While the common people are united as never before in their history, while Tories and Communists march side by side in the Forces, while business rivals share the protection of each other's premises and offer help and hospitality to bombed-out competitors, the churches, too often maintain their exclusiveness and mutual intolerance. Many of their leaders deplore this and are working for greater unity.

The urgency of the need for more positive action in this direction is powerfully stressed by Mr. Neville Hobson, clerk to the Beverley rural district council, well-known to many N A L G O members, and at one time a frequent contributor to these pages, in a little book he has written—"Unity, Peace and Concord—an Appeal to the Christian Churches on behalf of Youth" (Student Christian Movement Press, 1s.). Written primarily from the point of view of one who has played an outstanding part in various youth movements, the book is the most striking, logical, and convincing appeal for a united front of all Christian churches to oppose the German united front behind a deified Fuehrer we have read. The disunity of the churches, as Mr. Hobson points out, serves more than anything else to prejudice young people against them and, so long as it continues, organised Christianity will fail to win wholehearted support. An encouraging factor is the warm approbation given to the appeal by leaders of the Church of England, the Congregational and Baptist Unions, and the Methodist Conference, who contribute forewords. We warmly commend the book to all N A L G O members engaged in any way in church activities.

An exclusive interview with BEATRICE WEBB

The Anglo-Russian alliance and, still more, the unexampled heroism, single-minded resolution, and high technical skill of the Russians in resisting the Nazi onslaught, have made us realise how little we know of Russia and how much of that little is wrong. Here, in an exclusive interview with E. M. Hutchinson, chairman of the Surrey County branch of NALGO, BEATRICE WEBB, probably the greatest living authority on the Russian experiment, answers some of the most frequent questions about it, and discusses the Russian equivalent of local government. Mr. Hutchinson simultaneously reviews the new introduction to the third edition of "Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation," Sidney and Beatrice Webb's monumental work, which is being published this month.

SHORTLY after the U.S.S.R. became our declared ally, I suggested to the editor of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, that I should seek an interview with Mrs. Beatrice Webb for publication in this journal. I was not wholly disinterested in making the suggestion. I believe overwhelmingly in the need for a fuller understanding in this country of Soviet Russia and its inhabitants, but I should certainly have lacked courage to attempt to serve as interpreter had it not been for the opportunity to meet and talk with "The Webbs." No student of political science, of local Government in particular, however casual, fails to know that they have created an abiding monument.

I felt that a contribution in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE dealing with the U.S.S.R. should be derived from "the pair," who, to quote Bernard Shaw "having become the most skilled and best-informed investigators on earth so far as we know, were ready for the great Soviet experiment, and in their advanced age were able to give the first competent account of the new social structures that are evolving in Russia . . ."

An Entralling Story

In response to a request for an interview came a bulky envelope, containing not only the desired reply, but first proofs of a 44-page new introduction to a reprint of "Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation."* This indeed was largesse. Both first and second editions of the book were made available, in special format, to members of certain organisations, amongst them NALGO. The book is in two parts, the first descriptive of constitutional forms, the second of social trends. It is not only an indispensable work of reference, but an entralling story of human adventure in the most diverse forms. Its production took the authors, both "approaching their ninth decade" to many parts of the Soviet Union rarely reached by foreign visitors. It has been on my shelves for six years and has answered most of the questions put to me in that period by sympathisers and detractors alike.

The new introduction is explained as a response to certain general questions frequently raised since the signing of the Russo-German pact. But the title of the book is a statement of fact; the cover of the second edition has no question mark after the words "A New Civilisation"! When I asked Mrs. Webb if their general view had been confirmed since 1935, she replied with emphasis, "Yes," and gave me the following summary of the development of their interest in the U.S.S.R.

The post-war depression, coupled with previous experience, convinced them that capitalism was stricken by mortal diseases, of which unemployment and the decline in the birthrate were the most serious symptoms. Actively engaged in the work of the British Labour Party, they did not accept the Bolshevik solution, nor the theory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. But the collectivisation of agriculture, the success of co-operative production, and the multiformity of democracy in practice as they had observed it in the

U.S.S.R., had convinced them that "through planned production for community consumption, and the elimination of the profit-making motive, the Soviet Union has, in the short space of twenty years, increased the opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for the vast majority of its near two hundred million inhabitants, scattered over one-sixth of the earth's surface" (Intro. xlii).

This general declaration of faith by two people exceptionally well-qualified for its pronouncement, will no doubt bring into relief questions which have troubled many people during the last generation. Is Stalin a dictator



Care of children, an outstanding feature of the Soviet system, is exemplified by this happy group in a summer camp.

holding, if he did not obtain, power by methods similar to those of Hitler and Mussolini? Is the Soviet Union in any sense a democracy? What lies behind the execution of generals and the trials of the "Old Bolsheviks"? Faced by foreign aggression, will the unity of the Russian people hold?

Within a narrower confine, what is the reality of popular control in local affairs? Have we, as administrators, anything to learn from our opposite numbers of the U.S.S.R.?

For answers to the general questions, I turn first to the new introduction.

Is Stalin a Dictator?

No! says Mrs. Webb. He is not, to quote the dictionary definition, "a ruler . . . whose word is law" or one "who authoritatively prescribes a course of action or dictates what is to be done." He is an elected member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., a member of the presidium of that body, which selects the Council of Commissars, and has,

since May 1941, been the Prime Minister. In that office, she declares, his personal power is not greater than that of Mr. Churchill in this country, and is probably less than that of the President of the U.S.A. acting in the present state of "unlimited national emergency." But he is also the general secretary of the Communist party, in which office, by the constitutional structure of the party and by his own declarations, he does no more than carry out the decisions of the Central Committee. What, then, of the "Idolisation of the Leader," the distribution of portraits and busts by tens of thousands, the personality-boosting which has in the past attracted so much unfavourable comment? This, Mrs. Webb describes (borrowing Lenin's term) as one of the "Infantile Diseases of Soviet Communism." She claims that it is passing, that its place is being taken increasingly by popular recognition of local figures, "heroes" of the field and workshop.

Is Russia a Democracy?

Yes, says the author. A democracy characterised by active participation by the inhabitants, by absence of racial discrimination, by real control of elected representatives, and by novel uses of the referendum. How is this reconciled with the "One-Party" system and the massive approval votes recorded at elections? The sections of the introduction headed "The One-Party System," "The Referendum, the Initiative and the Recall," and "The Two-Party and Many Party Systems" deserve a careful study. Into a dozen pages are compressed a review of party government in nearly as many countries. The existence of minority rule under our own supposed two-party (but in reality three-party) system; the "spoils" system developed from two-party government in the U.S.A.; the instability of government in "many party" states, all are succinctly described. Not, as the author is careful to point out, to justify adoption here of the one-party system of the U.S.S.R., but to pose the question whether "sociologists have yet solved the problem of how to organise the government of the people, by the people, and, if be it added, for the good of the people." The one-party system in the U.S.S.R. is a product of civil war, and (as in modern Turkey) of social regeneration. To-day, in our own country, it is the product of international war.

But, Mrs. Webb maintains, there are other ways of testing public opinion than party-contested general elections. Nation-wide discussions over many months have preceded the enactment of major legislation. In conversation, Mrs. Webb referred to over 100,000 resolutions bearing on the draft law of the new constitution. In the main body of the work will be found descriptions of similar happenings in regard to collectivisation, and reform of marriage and abortion laws. Moreover, the one-party system of the U.S.S.R. does not mean that office in the multitude of representative bodies affecting man as citizen, producer, and consumer, is reserved to members of the Communist party. Far otherwise. Non-party members are exhorted and encouraged to participate in this work to the full.



Nowhere in the world have women attained equality with men to the extent they have in Russia. They are found even in the fighting line, bearing arms—like these two members of the Osoaviakhim defence organisation in the Azerbaiydzhan Republic.

Mrs. Webb lays stress on racial equality as an essential of democracy. I cannot do better than quote her words in a letter approving the general content of this article. "Seeing that Roosevelt and Churchill, in their war aims, single out faith in political democracy and the consequent freedom of the individual, whatever his race or creed," she writes, "the position of the British Empire, with its 500 million inhabitants is somewhat in contradiction with this alleged faith in democratic self-expression. Also, there is the discrimination against the negroes in the U.S.A. The U.S.S.R., on the contrary, with its 200 million of mixed races and creeds—some of its inhabitants being on a low level of capacity and behaviour—has instituted absolute racial equality, political and social, and has also tried to educate its people in the practice of political democracy and freedom of expression."

Trials and Executions

In a quarter of a year the views of a quarter of a century have been surprisingly modified. Those who have cried loudest against the "rule of terror" in the U.S.S.R. are now vehement in their demands for the wholesale internment of aliens and the utmost precautions against fifth columnists here. The actions of the Soviet Government appear in a new light with the emergence of Darlan, Laval, Quisling, and others.

Mrs. Webb does not deny the rigidity of political doctrine or, as she terms it, the "disease of orthodoxy." But she suggests that "a certain measure of repression is characteristic of the U.S.A. and of ourselves even in times of internal stability and freedom from aggression. In contrast, the Soviet Union for twenty years has had to face both counter-revolution and the fear and actuality of foreign aggression bent on the sweeping away of Bolshevism."

It will be appropriate here to give the gist of Mrs. Webb's reply to one of my specific points. I suggested that many people who would read this article appreciate the "ends" of the Soviet system, but deprecate the "means." "Revolutions," she said, "are ruthless." "Crudities and cruelties," she adds, in the introduction, "are inherent in violent revolution and fear of foreign aggression." We discussed historic parallels, the century of intrigue in our own country, following 1688, including participation in treasonable activities by one Prime Minister—Bolingbroke—and the ancestor of another—

the Duke of Marlborough! Mrs. Webb believes that the great theoretical "splits," the Trotskyite opposition to building socialism in one country and the conflict over collectivisation, which gave rise to the murder of Kirov and the long succession of (mainly) abortive plots are things of the past. The formidable opposition engendered by Nazi aggression, the scorched-earth policy, and the activities of "partisans," suggest a unified resolve which has not been found elsewhere on the European continent since September, 1939.

No Local Government Apathy!

We are accustomed in this country to think of local government as something distinct from and subordinate to central government and the central-local relationship expressed in audits inspections, grants in aid, and, above all, in the application of the general principles of *ultra vires* has been the subject of much analysis and controversy. I think that it is generally accepted that there should be sufficient central direction to ensure minimum local performance. If this is so, I asked Mrs. Webb, are the methods employed in the U.S.S.R. essentially different from ours, and, if so, are they more or less efficient if judged by results? The answer to this, she suggested, was not to be found in the constitutional framework.

Contrast the English doctrine of *ultra vires* with the following quotation from Chapter I of "Soviet Communism": "Every organ of administration in the U.S.S.R. is capable of legislation and of executive action. Every one of them is free to act, within its own area and for all who find themselves within that area, very much as it thinks fit, so long as it does not actually contravene any action or decision by a superior authority. But, equally, every one of them can be peremptorily restrained and may have its action vetoed and cancelled by any organ occupying a superior place in the hierarchy."

Assurance of performance is to be found rather in freedom of criticism unrestrained by a law of libel. The importance of free and constant criticism has been as greatly undervalued as its existence has been under-estimated. In this, as in other matters, the leadership of members of the Communist party plays a great part. Failure even on the part of a village Soviet is sure of investigation at the instance of some party member, the investigation being undertaken in practice jointly by

representatives of the Government and the Communist party.

I suggested to Mrs. Webb that interest in local government in England, if measured in terms of voting percentages at elections was low. How have the Russians developed real participation in democracy locally?

"The Soviet citizen," she replied, "is not bored. He believes in his own living philosophy." That philosophy assures to him rights defined in the Constitution of 1936, but, Mrs. Webb pointed out, this particular declaration of human rights differs from all similar declarations by being coupled with an equally specific declaration of obligations.

Nor have these rights and obligations, once promulgated, been forgotten. They are revived in individual minds with every one of the innumerable discussions which are a notable feature of Soviet life. In commenting on the discussions preceding legislation to which earlier reference has been made, Mrs. Webb emphasised their educative character. English local government, she felt, still suffers in the counties from the domination of a local aristocracy, and in the smaller urban areas from a similar domination by interested local tradespeople who still desire private profit-making to continue. The Soviet citizen sees a direct connection between effort and achievement.

Control of Representatives

Arising out of this topic, I asked Mrs. Webb whether there was any machinery in the Soviet Union by which electors could check the results of their choice, having in mind the great number of demands which Sir Ernest Simon quotes as having been addressed to candidates at one of the Moscow City Soviet elections. She pointed out the power of recall exercisable against all elected representatives, and here Mr. Sidney Webb interjected that this right had, in fact, been exercised in the case of the Soviet of the Crimean Autonomous Region on one occasion. Again, Mrs. Webb emphasised the important rôle of the Communist party as a unifying element.

Some of the functions which we regard as almost characteristic of English local authorities are administered in the Soviet Union through other channels. Among social services, Mrs. Webb pointed out the activities of trade unions in the maintenance of rest homes and sanatoria and the administration of help to women in pregnancy—a function without English parallel—by the medical staffs of factories. In many instances, clinics are closely related to industrial units and in particular to the State factories. In the allocation of benefits, what is familiarly known as the triangle—representatives of the factory management, the trade union, and the Communist party—plays an important part.

On the other hand, the freedom to experiment on the part of each type of authority involves the local Soviets in ranges of activity unfamiliar to us. Thus, the Moscow City Soviet is responsible for the "Metro"—the new and rapidly developing underground railway service. The extent of replanning and reconstruction undertaken by the local Soviets far transcends the English conception of town and country planning. Mrs. Webb confessed that she could only describe the financial basis of local activity as complicated and very experimental. In some instances, large revenues are derived from what we should consider trading undertakings. What is of the greatest importance is the integration of activity within the framework of an over-riding national plan.

Place of the Trade Union

Whilst man, the citizen, expresses himself through local, regional, and all-union Soviets, man, the producer, speaks and acts through his trade union. Employees of local Soviets, without distinction by grade or type of employment, are members of one union. Mrs. Webb

(Continued at foot of next page)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN RUSSIA

**By PAT SLOAN, author of "Soviet Democracy,"
"How the Soviet State is Run," etc.**

Unlike Mrs. Webb, Mr. Sloan is a Communist, and readers may regard his views as propagandist. Nevertheless, we consider this thumbnail sketch of Russian local government of sufficient interest to merit publication in our non-political pages.

THE effectiveness of the Red Army's resistance to the forces of Nazi Germany has raised many questions in people's minds here.

Why has the U.S.S.R. proved more efficient than Poland and France? Why have the Red Army soldiers such a high level of morale? How is that great country run?

Many useful lessons can be drawn from a comparison of their local government and ours.

In the Soviet Union, the land, industry, farming and trade are in the hands of public organisations. Their use is planned to meet the needs of the community. Every local authority has the right to undertake any enterprise it wishes, so long as this does not conflict with the general plans for the larger territory of which it forms a part.

Two examples will illustrate the differences. In London, before the reconstruction of Waterloo Bridge could be begun, there were years of negotiation between the L.C.C. and the landlords on the two banks of the Thames. Even then the scheme could not be started until the landlords had taken an enormous ransom from the London people in return for the use of "their" private land for the public benefit. In Moscow, if a bridge is to be built over the river (and they've built ten of them in recent years) it is simply the practical question of employing direct labour to build the bridge: the land itself is under the direct control of the local council (Soviet).

Again, in Britain, it is illegal for a municipality to open shops, even if it knows that it could thus provide its people with better and cheaper goods than they can get from private enterprise. But so afraid are the private traders of Britain that municipal trade would

cut them out that they have seen to it that such a public service is illegal.

In Russia, in contrast, it is the trade for private profit which is illegal. A man in Moscow tried to buy up candles at the beginning of the blackout, to sell at a profit: he got ten years. But the Moscow municipal shops are stocked with candles for the people at prices fixed by the public authorities.

The variety of undertakings of the local government bodies of the Soviet Union is illustrated by the committees of Moscow Soviet. They cover every aspect of government. In 1936 there were 25 such committees, covering the following branches of administration: building (all by direct labour); housing (most of which is either municipal or co-operative property); schools; roads and river embankments; health; main drainage; railway transport; tramways; culture; local trade; communal economy; local industry and co-operation; public feeding; lighting, green belt, and parks; justice, police, and fire service; orphans; adult education; motor and horse traffic; the Underground; communications; agriculture; fuel; anti-aircraft defence; finance. Finally, there is the City Planning Commission, charged with the co-ordination of the whole of the development of the city, in conformity with the broader plans for the development of the country as a whole.

From the above, it will be seen that a Soviet municipality is almost a "city state" in itself, controlling every aspect of service to its citizens.

Since the Soviet city operates its own industry and trade it can finance itself to a great extent from the "profits" (surplus of revenue over expenditure) of such enterprises. Moreover, the Russian local authority receives a proportion of all State revenues raised through taxes in its territory. It also receives for its own use a proportion of the money raised for State loans on its territory.

Since one of the main aims of the Soviet

organisation is to draw the ordinary citizen into the work of government, and since most workers are public employees (in State and municipal enterprise, since there is no other) there is no distinction, as there is in this country, between the ordinary worker and the public employee or civil servant. All Soviet citizens enjoy the same rights to take part in political life and, indeed, it is regarded as a good thing that those acquainted with the inner running of the local authority should take an active part in public controversy.

In the U.S.S.R. Stalin has personally encouraged all citizens, whatever their walk in life, ruthlessly to expose and combat all inefficiency in administration, nepotism, or other faults. He has given the support of the Soviet State to every form of criticism from the working population, whether in industry or in the public services, of those who do not do their job efficiently or conscientiously.

Finally, attention must be drawn to the basic difference politically between a Russian and a British local authority.

In Britain, every local council is torn between conflicting interests; the interests of private ownership, of rent and profit—and the interests of those who live by their work. In the U.S.S.R. there is only one common interest—the interest of those who live by their work, because there are no others in Soviet society. Therefore, the local authorities in the U.S.S.R. can always plan for their people as a whole without coming up against the vested interests of rent and profit.

Having studied the working of Moscow's administration, Sir Ernest Simon wrote: "I believe that they have the best constitution yet devised for effective city government, that their leaders are men of integrity, enthusiasm, and ability, that the advantages of Socialism and of the one-party system for town-planning purposes are of overwhelming importance."

And, comparing Moscow's Ten Year Plan of city development with Mr. Herbert Morrison's vision for London of "the limitation of the area of the city, a great green belt, a coherent and homogeneous local government, and a town plan," he comments: "Mr. Morrison says: 'This is not practical politics for to-day, it is a vision of the London of my dreams.' In Moscow it is practical politics; much of it is already done." (Moscow in the Making, pp. 233-4.)

(Continued from preceding page.)

emphasised the importance of the trade union as a channel for constructive criticism. I have myself seen in factory and office alike something of the outspokenness of this criticism directed equally against fellow workers and management, through "wall newspapers." In a planned economy, the trade unions encourage every means of increasing production, since wages are directly related to previously ascertained output. From this attitude, Mrs. Webb pointed out, have come those developments which have not been universally acceptable to trade union leaders in other countries—business accounting brigades, socialist emulation, stakhanovism and the "patronage" of weak undertakings by strong. Far from being the emasculated force sometimes pictured, Mrs. Webb believes that Soviet trade unionism is one of the three great pillars of the socialist state.

"Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation" extends to over 1,200 pages. Despite this, the book is a miracle of compression. It has not, therefore, been the purpose of this article to attempt any detailed description of the structure and functioning of the Soviet state. The aim has been to induce members of the Association to seek for themselves information from a source whose objectivity is guaranteed by the reputation of the authors. That such objective information is essential, is clear from Mr. Bernard Shaw's comment in a recent issue of "Picture Post": "The history of Communist Russia for the past twenty years, in the British and American press is a record in recklessly prejudiced mendacity."



British experts who have visited Moscow all acknowledge the high quality of the civil defence organisation. This picture, familiar to officers here, shows a decontamination exercise.

SOLVING THE AREA PROBLEM

By J. H. WARREN M.A., D.P.A., Town Clerk of Slough

In this, the second article in our new series on local government reconstruction, Mr. Warren surveys some of the solutions already proposed for what is known as the area problem, and advances his own. Some officers may think them too radical, others may regard them as too conservative. We shall welcome full discussion and elaboration of them.

IT was frequently asserted before the war that for "one service or another" the existing plan of local government organisation failed to provide a large enough area; and in several quarters it was contended that some services required a "regional" area, transcending even the largest county boroughs or counties. In most instances the champion of the super-scale area was interested in some particular service and considered it in the light of his own conception of its ideal requirements, ignoring any effects of a divorce of that service from others. On the other hand, some students of local government who favoured regionalism saw that each service could not be dealt with piecemeal, and applied themselves to devise a new plan which would include a new regional organ. They had to face the fact that, even among the services which such an organ could undertake, not one required quite the same area as another. Either, then, an arbitrary area must be chosen for all, or something like an *ad hoc* body must be erected for each. If, moreover, they were prepared to admit, as some of them were, that the best areas for some services were small ones, a new plan had to cater for a more complex division of services than exists at present.

It would be worth while to survey one or two of the solutions arrived at, if one accepted the case for super-scale areas in the sense in which it has been put forward, namely, that certain services require to be handled in regional areas entirely by one regional organ—"handling" meaning all functions of control, planning, and execution. Since I cannot accept the case for larger areas in this sense, I leave such solutions on one side and pass to consider the assumptions which led to them.

The Industrial Analogy.

A good deal of the sentiment for super-scale areas is part of a general ideology in favour of large-scale units which has been derived from the sphere of industry. But even in that sphere reactions to this ideology have been setting in for some years past, as a consequence of practical experience of the problems of large-scale administration. In fact, many super-sized industrial units have undergone a process of decentralisation in one form or another, in which there has been the common feature that the unit is resolved into component parts, operated at lower levels of executive direction, and, to some extent, of control.

The same kind of economic considerations do apply to local government services as apply to those activities of service and production which we call "industry," even though the parallels may not be, and in fact are not, complete. We have to recognise, therefore, that the same "law of increasing return," which favours the larger unit in industry, at any rate up to a point, is applicable to local government services. This is obviously so in the case of the utility services; in fact, the "law" operates more strongly in those services, as it always does where a large part of the media of production and distribution are in the form of fixed plant. It would, however, be a mistake to assume that the law has no effect in other spheres of local govern-

ment service. It has an influence where plant of any kind, or depots, or even the need of a varied staff, are involved. The "law" is, however, nothing more than the statement of a tendency—a tendency that expenses do not

then combined were too small, and led to wasteful use of plant; though in this case the special factor operated that electricity cannot (for "supply" purposes) be stored, and each one of a number of small generating units had, therefore, to carry its own reserve for "peak" demands. The economies of large scale generation have now been secured by the establishment of the "grid," leaving most authorities with distribution business only. Whatever other case the McGowan Report may have had for its proposal for super-scale distributive units, it offered no tangible evidence that the largest distributors supplied more cheaply than the smaller, or that their costs were less; and the smaller and medium-sized distributors did not fail to make the point, in the keen controversy that ensued on the issue of the report, that they showed definite advantage in their more intensive cultivation of their market, their closer knowledge of local conditions, and their easier means of control.

In the case of gas supply (gas can be stored) there is nothing in statistics kept over long periods of years to show any appreciable difference in costs of production and distribution between the larger undertakings and those of medium or even smaller towns. In the case of transport, we have to remember that all undertakers have now been fitted into a system of regional control, though there is as yet no unification of services. In the case of water supply, any wastefulness which once resulted from the absence of control over resort to sources can be, and to some extent has been, remedied by central departmental action; and while it is impossible to compare undertakings drawing their supplies from far distant centres with the type of undertaking which draws its supplies from local sources, there is little evidence of the effects of size even among the latter.

Enter "Regionalism."

It was not until shortly before the war that any suggestions were made in responsible quarters for regional areas for any other local government services. True, the Hadow Report suggested that regionalism might be the eventual goal of the measures it proposed to deal with the disintegration of education services, but it did not argue the case on "economic" grounds, or say how the regionalism was to be implemented.

Apart from individual writings, the Report of the Tyneside Commission, published in 1937, was the first document to carry the philosophy of regionalism into the sphere of non-utility services. It advocated a regional area for drainage, education, public assistance, all classified roads, police, and fire brigades. It was evidently "stumped" for a regional constitution, and ended up weakly by pronouncing the area of one geographical county as the region, and by a vague suggestion that the county council might be the nucleus of a new regional organ.

It contained repeated asseverations that the services "should be administered more economically and efficiently over a regional area," but recited no evidence, and produced no reasons of its own, to justify that assumption. If its proposals were grounded on reasons at all, these resided first in a desire

THE SOLUTION.

While finding the present structure of local government sound in principle and capable (if properly applied, and supplemented by machinery for planning and concerted action over contiguous areas) of providing economic and administratively efficient areas, Mr. Warren suggests a number of important changes and innovations, including :

- Extension of county borough government, with automatic elevation to county borough status of every town of over 50,000 inhabitants;
- Increase of the responsibilities of non-county boroughs and urban districts, with greater delegation to them of powers now exercised by county councils;
- Machinery for regular consultation and joint action between county councils and non-county boroughs and urban districts;
- The creation of a new Regional or sub-Regional Body formed on a federal basis, which would not itself operate services but would have four main functions :

1. Supervision of town and country planning and development schemes;
2. The securing of concerted action in dealing with new tasks entrusted to local authorities;
3. Continuous review, in association with the Government departments, of local government areas, including those of county councils;
4. Periodical review of the distribution of functions among local authorities in the area.

This Regional Body to be assisted, on the one hand by a Regional Board composed of representatives of Government departments, and on the other by standing advisory panels of local government officers in the region.

increase in proportion to the size of the unit. Practical experience shows that, above a certain minimum of size, any inherent economic advantage the "law" brings tends to become less and less, and to be offset by increasing expenses or loss of efficiency due to imperfect control, unless some process of decentralisation is applied.

If the case for enlarged areas rests on general considerations of the kind contained in the "law of increasing return," it rests on very debatable ground. Of itself, the "law" holds no clue to the point of maximum advantage in any particular industry or service. It is not certain that even the utility services stand to gain much from it, if we consider them as they are to-day and not as they were some years ago. It was manifest, for example, that before the electricity reforms, the areas in which generation and distribution were

to spread the charge for these services, and secondly, in the preposterous assumption that the differences between town and country were no longer real in relation to these services, and that one authority should, therefore, deal with both to secure uniformity of provision. "By this means the benefits and advantages to be derived would be within the reach of all inhabitants regardless of their environment."

It was not suggested how rural ratepayers failed to obtain the benefit of public assistance under the present system, why secondary schools should be placed at mile intervals in a rural area, nor how the surveyor of Newcastle would find "great advantages" to result if his classified roads "were placed under the control of a regional authority covering a very wide area." Economy and efficiency of administration as such were simply not dealt with in the Report.

Virtues of the Smaller Area

While it is doubtful that the "inherent advantages of size" point at all conclusively to a unit of regional scope, there are many considerations which favour an area of more modest scale; provided it is sufficiently large to employ the proper types of staff. The staff is on the spot and its accessibility to the job usually saves expense in many directions; it has local knowledge and can take quick executive action.

Moreover, while the market for industry is not territorial, it is of the essence of local government that it should be. A large part of the efficiency of local government must lie in its responsiveness to the requirements of a particular community, and administrative machinery must, therefore, be of the kind which can provide a ready and knowledgeable response. A regional organ for any service would necessarily imply that one agency caters for areas of vastly different types (urban and rural), and any idea that their requirements are, or can ever be, the same, is to my mind false. For example, rural areas do not in general require developed sewage and sewage disposal arrangements, simply because of the varying densities of population and building development; paving of streets is of vital importance in big cities but would be waste of public money in rural roads; large secondary schools may have to be provided fairly close together in built-up areas, but are hardly called for at equivalent intervals in the recesses of rural England.

Local Machinery Essential

Transport and power have no doubt abolished some of the differences between town and country, but the differences are and will always remain considerable. It seems difficult to conceive that the arrangements for such places would be better or more economically executed from some remote regional centre by widely peripatetic staffs; and a regional area would in any event have to make use of the apparatus already developed locally for areas such as towns. It is significant that in Lancashire—the largest unit in the country with a mixed jurisdiction—considerations of practicability in administration have in many instances led the county council to delegate executive functions to boroughs and districts, or to make use of these as agents for the discharge of county council responsibilities—and Lancashire would, of course, not be nearly as large as the "region" conceived of in some quarters.

Before concluding my observation on "size" it would be useful to point out now (since it has so often been forgotten) that an authority administering a complex of services may or become a large enough unit to secure advantages of the kind which might otherwise be secured by a wide scope for one service. In other words, "size" may be achieved by aggregate of functions and not merely by territorial scope. This consideration is eminently applicable to staff. Associate, say, an engineering department with a legal and financial

department in a medium-sized town, and you can get the same economic use of staff, and the same economies which accrue from the use of central establishments, as if you had a large territorial unit for one service, providing a legal and financial staff of its own. Those who look at areas from the angle of one service almost invariably fail to notice this aspect of the matter.

Need for Concerted Action

Having now dealt with the issue of size as affected by pre-conceived notions of its effects upon efficiency and economy in the executive spheres, we should not do justice to the issue if



"We must apologise for a small gap in the programme."

we failed to recognize that there are other and sounder considerations which have sometimes been in mind in the plea for super-scale areas or "regionalism."

The requirements of contiguous areas can, we must admit, grow to a pattern which needs to be looked at and planned for as a whole. The growth of new towns or urbanised areas, the siting of factories, schools, and houses have their repercussions over very wide areas. Many conditions are operative requiring territories served by adjacent county boroughs or county councils to conform to some key plan in matters of this kind. Moreover, as we have been forcibly reminded of late, new tasks descend upon local authorities which call for concerted action, say between counties and county boroughs, over wider areas than any one of them; and we are bound to admit that there has been no machinery in the past to secure the necessary contacts and co-operation. Not one of the executive authorities concerned may see the whole of the problem, and with the best will in the world it is difficult for any of them to co-operate until there is some common view of the requirements of the situation, and some effective means ofconcerting their action. The central departments have not met the needs of the situation in the past (though in existing conditions the responsibility is theirs) largely because of their failure to decentralize and make territorial contacts with their local authorities.

It is in considerations of this kind that the real case for some form of regionalism arises. There must be conformity to the larger "plan," and there must be machinery which, while it leaves executive action to the authorities on the spot, secures their co-operation. In other words, any efficient plan of local government must ensure that any new task of urgency or

creative effort must be *prehensile* over larger areas than any of the existing local authority units. This, however, does not establish the need for a regional organ which will have executive functions. Even if an organ of this kind were established, it would find itself, having taken over the services of smaller authorities, forced to decentralize and delegate back to the local units. As the local units already exist, the sounder course is to create machinery which will secure conformity to a general plan, or concerted executive action, as the case may be, but which will not itself undertake executive functions, and so break down the conditions of efficiency in that sphere of effort.

The Alternative

Some machinery of this kind will almost certainly be established since the need has become so obvious, and unless it is created at the local government level it will develop, as it has had to develop during the war in the absence of any other machinery, entirely through the control and agency of the decentralized Government departments. Apart from any political arguments against such a solution, the situation calls for the practical local knowledge and initiative of local bodies, and the "field" experience of their advisers.

A ready illustration of the considerations just mentioned was afforded by what happened in dealing with refugees from the bombed towns. No arrangement had been made "centrally" for concerted activity to a common plan. An authority overwhelmed by refugees could only apply to its neighbours and find that they were in the same plight, and it was not for several days that the regional authorities stepped in to provide some improvised clearing-house arrangement. It might have been argued that this clearly established the case for larger local government areas. Actually, it did nothing of the kind. Mr. Willink recognized the real character of the necessary measures in his speech in the House on civil defence after his work on the London aspects of the problem. He found local councils still the best executive agents, but they had to have a plan to work to, and machinery forconcerting their action.

Co-ordination of Services

And now, before I apply any conclusions arrived at in the foregoing review of territorial considerations, let me say that I consider that more problems have arisen and are likely to arise from the division of *services* between several authorities than from the division of *areas* among them for one service or another. Most local government officers who have experience of both county boroughs and county areas will agree that administration is easier where one organism is dealing with all services, as in the county borough, and that, even before the war, the division of services in the county areas led to great difficulties. One can cite many instances, and it is only typifying the kind of difficulties that arise if I mention those which accrued in school provision and housing development because the county is the education authority, and the borough the housing authority. The wartime services of the local authorities have emphasised the difficulties which arise when services are divided between authorities; and one need only cite the incidence, in county areas, of A.R.P. and in particular post-raid services—the problems of the latter having recently called for special measures in vulnerable areas outside the county boroughs. The size of areas has received an inordinate degree of attention from "outside" critics of the existing system, and few have studied the difficulties of dissociated services. They have thus failed to grasp some of the real defects of the existing plan, at any rate as it has been applied, and, on the other hand, to pay regard to the supreme value of keeping

one service associated with another in their suggestions for reconstruction.

If, then, there is no case, or only a very debatable case, for a regional unit with executive functions, but the present plan is capable of providing suitable areas if it were rightly applied and some mechanism established for concerted action and conformity to key planning, the chief aim should be to create organs which administer the widest practicable range of functions, to avoid the evils of a division of services. On the one hand this implies that county borough government should be retained, and applied to all large towns. Even if a particular service might ideally do with a larger area even for executive purposes, more advantage will accrue to that service and others by keeping all services in association.

County Borough Government

The virtues of the county borough type of government are impressive. Each service has a "market" of the dimensions and character which allow easy contact between "producer" and "consumer," quick action on the spot, close knowledge of consumers' requirements, and effective supervision by council and management, the council itself being an effective focal point for reference to and by the management in dealing with consumers' needs and "complaints." The wants of citizens in large town are a complex which can be met only by the closest co-operation of one service with another; and the county borough organism provides the potentiality of such a co-operation as does no other. The association of its departments renders it singularly adapted to new tasks, by reason of the assistance which one department can readily give to another, and the varied types of staff it has at its disposal through its wide range of functions. Novel tasks are thus rendered quickly prehensile. At the same time, the collocation of services and departments makes for economy all round; central establishments like the legal and financial serving the executive departments such as the engineering, architectural, etc., and these departments in turn advising and serving the administration.

Unified Control

Finally, the whole organism is under a unified control which brings the public representative and the expert into the closest contact and interchange of views, and by this means, and by reason of the visibility of local action to a local public, effectively precludes the growth of bureaucratic outlook and habit. The whole organism has elasticity, resource, economy, and responsiveness to public need; and these spring essentially from that concentration of many-sided activity under local and unified control which is the characteristic of this type of local government.

And this is the type of government the Tyneside Commission proposed to obliterate on Tyneside. For what? For an undefined regionalism in certain services, on the assumption that administration would be more efficient and economic if that area were administered in common with the rural tracts of Northumberland.

The sole comment the Commission offered on county borough government in or for the area was "that there were now objections to county borough government." And what were these? One only is cited in the report, i.e. that in paragraph 142: "The area covered by a county borough is usually well developed, containing valuable residential and industrial property with a proportionately high rateable value and corresponding benefits to the inhabitants. As the districts contiguous to it develop and thus increase in rateable value, the boundaries are extended to absorb the newly developed area. This extension may be of

advantage to the districts so acquired, but at the same time it reacts on the county council by reducing the area under its control, with a corresponding loss in rateable value." Financial adjustment was obviously the dominant consideration; and true economy and efficiency of administration must take second place. Impaired financial strength might possibly be involved for the county council in the obvious solution of building up a larger county borough (or boroughs, for there is nothing necessarily unsound in the existence of adjacent county boroughs); though the minority report (which favoured a county borough solution) produced strong evidence that it would not be. In any event, was not the block grant formula designed to introduce a new means of meeting disparities in area finance, or is no other adjustment conceivable?

The balance of advantage lies in establishing county borough type of government at a lower level than 75,000. The level taken in the Act of 1888 was 50,000, and the increase to 75,000 in 1926 was largely the result of county council pressure on financial grounds which are no longer cogent, since the grant formula introduced three years later a new principle of grant for local government services "national" in character.

The county council must likewise be retained as an essential unit in the plan. While the larger urban areas should be taken out of its scope, it should be recognised as the right organ to carry out the major services in the rural areas, and in the smaller urban areas. The latter should be allowed to build up functions with growth, and they should, wherever possible, exercise delegated powers and agency functions for the county councils, since this in itself would secure for their areas some measure of the advantage of associated services.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

My conclusions and proposals are as follows:

1. The present plan is, on the whole, sound in conception and can be made to provide economic and administratively efficient areas for all phases of administration in most services, and for executive operation in other services. It requires, however, a better application, and will continue to require re-application from time to time. In this process, it is vital to observe the following principles:

(a) It should be the aim to establish authorities with as substantial a range of functions as is practicable; the difficulties of present conditions springing as much, if not more, from divisions of responsibility for services rather than from any lack of wider areas for individual services. This implies that the county borough type of government should not only be retained but considerably extended; the present level of eligibility for county borough status should be reduced to 50,000 and should not be dependent upon the promotion of a Parliamentary Bill. Moreover, the aim should be to increase the responsibilities of substantial non-county boroughs and urban districts. There should be further facilities for delegation by the county council to such authorities, and though one or two county councils have shown a disposition to do this voluntarily, the decision should not be left entirely in their hands.

(b) While county council boundaries are not, and never have been, related to existing social and economic conditions, an organ such as the county council is a necessary element in the structure. It should carry on all major services in the rural and smaller urban areas. Its boundaries, however, should not be regarded as sacrosanct and should be subject to review in the same way as any other authority's; and in some instances substantial interchanges of areas might be effected between counties.

To counter the difficulties inherent in the

division of responsibilities in the county areas, and to facilitate concerted action, wherever necessary, there should be some mechanism for regular consultation and joint action between the county council and the non-county boroughs and urban districts of the kind which has existed in practice in Lancashire for many years past, through the media of the Non-County Boroughs and Urban District Councils Association, there operative on a county basis.

2. For some services, key planning is required over wider areas than are provided by the existing plan. Some machinery for concerted action is also needed over wider areas. For these two purposes there is a need for what may be called a regional area; and it seems the best course to establish for these purposes a regional organ which could also appropriately deal with the adjustment of the main plan from time to time, i.e. boundary review, and consideration of the distribution of functions in cases where the distribution is left elastic. This new body should not be conceived of as executant. The executant would in all cases be the appropriate local authority or authorities of the existing plan; and where some scheme covering adjoining areas could not be carried out by each executing an allotted part, one could be chosen as agent for all.

FUNCTIONS OF REGIONAL BODY

The regional body could be given planning in the more specific sense of that word, which indicates functions under town and country planning legislation, but it should also be understood that proposals for development of certain services should come before it so that the wider area can be developed in conformity with some total view of its requirements. This would involve the selection of a certain number of items, such as the choice of sites and the provision of new roads, institutions, and main drainage proposals, in which the executant authorities would have to bring their proposals before the regional body. The second function of the regional unit would be to secure concerted action in dealing with any new tasks entrusted to local authorities. Thirdly, the new regional unit should be associated with the central departments in the establishment of a permanent Boundary Commission which would give continuous attention to the re-organisation of local government areas to meet changed conditions. Fourthly, though the distribution of functions, as between the various types of authority, may have to be dealt with primarily by legislative means (with, I hope, some greater degree of elasticity to meet area characteristics), even the distribution of functions can never be left entirely static, and accordingly the new regional unit should review from time to time the distribution of functions among the authorities in its area. Even if this function were only consultative it would prove of inestimable value.

A FEDERAL STRUCTURE

I conceive of the new unit as a local government organ, though it would work side by side with some regional board comprising representatives of some of the Departments of State. I cannot conceive of it, however, as constituted on existing representative models. It could be on a federal basis, readily established if each region were organised in associations of county councils, county boroughs, non-county boroughs, urban districts, etc. It is unnecessary that the lines on which it may be urgently necessary to bring such a regional organ into being at the close of the war should necessarily constitute its final structure. It would work with the skilled assistance of local government officers in the region, apart from any staff it would assemble itself, and the local government officers should be organised into standing advisory panels for the purpose of this

(Continued on next page)

HOW SHEFFIELD DEALS WITH BLITZINFORMATION

In his article on Blitzinformation in the August Journal, Tom Harrisson specially praised the organisation at Sheffield. Here we publish an authoritative account of the Sheffield system—which might well serve as a model for other authorities, and should go a long way to satisfy the widespread demand for practical suggestions which Mr. Harrisson's article aroused.

If it is true that hope springs eternal, it is equally true that hope deferred maketh the heart sick. That is the crux of morale: to maintain the hope and prevent the despair. Hence, those who are dispossessed must not only be kept alive, but their lives must be made worth living. The services exist to do this, but they are confusing in their multiplicity. The first job of an information service is to reduce this confusion to coherence. It thus pervades all other services. But it cannot stop at codification; it has to interpret and simplify. Information must also advertise itself, not only to ensure that people will know where to ask, but also what to ask about. Moreover, the close contact the information service makes with all who have been affected by raids places it in a unique position to discover and report difficulties to those able to rectify them.

Before the war, the organisation of general information for the public was undertaken by the public library, often under conditions of great difficulty. Many newspapers also gave an information service, sometimes expertly done, often supplemented from the library. There were, of course, other sources of special information, such as railway and travel agencies, and the Council of Social Service had begun the Citizens Advice Bureau. Information bureaux had also been set up by local authorities in a few of the larger towns.

AREA PROBLEM

(Continued from preceding page)

assistance. With a scope such as I have indicated, the new regional organ would have to subdivide its activities, maintaining a number of commissions which would possibly be of a mixed character.

As to the territorial scope of such units, I do not think that the present defence regions would constitute serviceable areas, as some would be too large. The Government departments might retain such regions for purposes of their own de-centralization and regional activity; but the local government regions and organs might, in relation to them, be sub-regional in scope. The area of the regional unit need not be different for any of its functions. The objects cited could be secured by a general area and body, so long as such units were everywhere established. Collaboration in any project involving services or areas in adjoining regions would then present no major difficulties.

3. As to the public utilities, I consider that there is not now, in view of recent measures, so strong a case for any separate and radical overhaul of the areas in which local authority undertakings are operated as has sometimes been contended; and I regard the continued association of these utilities with what are called the "ordinary" local government services as itself a factor tending to make for all-round economy as well as for the co-ordination of services in the interests of the citizen consumer.

I am conscious that I have not fully evidenced every view expressed, nor indicated my proposals in anything more than broad outline. Neither course could be taken within the compass of this article. I am also conscious that the views I have expressed here, e.g. on county areas, may appear to some as radical. I consider them as a whole to be conservative. We are only progressive if we know what and when to conserve. We shall only conserve if we are prepared to progress.

The war brought the Ministry of Information and the air-raid bureaux set up as part of the relief-in-kind scheme by public assistance departments. Apart from news and propaganda, however, the Ministry of Information had but a limited and rather confused idea of the problem; the Ministry of Health appeared to be little better informed; and the local authorities in general were not actively disturbed. "It won't happen to us" was the prevailing attitude, in spite of the evidence of bombing elsewhere. It might have been thought that the experience of the first heavy raids would have been passed on to all local authorities in vulnerable areas by the departments concerned; but if the attempt was made, the pace was too slow to get there on time. Financial support was limited by the government, which, instead of setting standards, tended to follow the standards already established by progressive local authorities. The Citizens Advice Bureau, living for the main part on goodwill, had done excellent work, but its resources and experience were strictly limited, and the number of trained staff available was small. Here then are the quartet of information agencies: the Ministry of Information, the public library, the local air-raid inquiry bureau, and the Citizens Advice Bureau—all endowed with the best of intentions, very thin for lack of nourishment, and all singing in different keys.

Unity of Control Essential

Mr. Tom Harrisson says that information is indivisible. It is. There should be unity of control; there should be no dissonance; the information service should be an integral part of the civil defence organisation. The first business is to train the quartet in such a way that its pianissimo is as effective as its fortissimo; that is, when times are quiet it should continue its work, ready, when the need arises, to expand its volume indefinitely. It has been found practicable to do this in Sheffield, and part of the object of this article is to show how it was done.

First of all, there is the permanent information bureau of the public welfare department, staffed by competent full-time officials who keep abreast of the stream of information issued by the government departments, changed rulings and "case" decisions, local practices, etc., thus forming a reliable base for the expanded organisation which is planned to operate in stages commensurate with the extent of enemy attack. This staff must also do most of the planning of the information service.

Value of Libraries Staff

Then, by a happy accident, the honorary secretary of the local Ministry of Information committee is also the city librarian. For the first two or three weeks after a heavy raid, the work of his staff declines considerably, owing to a falling off in public demand, so that a good proportion can be released for information duties. His is a staff, moreover, who have experience of dealing sympathetically with the public, who are used to giving information, and to whom an index is part of the familiar pattern of daily life. The Citizens Advice Bureau, which carries on independently in quiet times, joins the general information service and brings with it a considerable number of intelligent voluntary workers.

The plan adopted in Sheffield is that when

the demand is light, the information service is carried on entirely by the public welfare department under the direction of the public welfare officer. After a heavy raid, the city librarian assumes control, thus relieving a colleague overburdened by other duties. But the public welfare information staff remains, supplemented by the library staff; the Citizens Advice Bureau and its voluntary workers, and the Ministry of Information. Such an arrangement demands planned co-operation—an over-worked phrase, but a much underworked principle. With goodwill it can be and has been achieved. Thus are the two first requirements of an information service satisfied: unity of control, giving unity of purpose; and flexibility which ensures expansion.

In achieving this unity, it is important that the advantages of diversity are not lost. The Citizens Advice Bureau, for example, unrestricted by regulations, can often act in cases not covered by statutory provision; it has, moreover, its poor man's lawyer service and its funds for the dépendants of serving men; it has its own special experience and voluntary workers. The searcher service, which was one of the outstanding successes in Sheffield, was organised for another purpose by the Ministry of Information, who also provided a loudspeaker van. An arrangement previously made by the Ministry of Information for the use of police loudspeaker cars, dovetailed easily into the scheme, but a warning should be entered here against complicated statements and the need for well-trained announcers.

Scope of Service

The next problem is that of training, but before it can be considered it is necessary to explain the scope of the information service in Sheffield which operates after a heavy raid.

The Rest Centre.—At each rest centre there will be an information officer who will give advice, distribute the appropriate forms for claiming compensation, etc., help people to complete them, and deal with inquiries regarding missing relatives. (This is important, since families may be separated and anxious to discover the whereabouts of each other; in addition to which there is a strong likelihood that the relatives of the dead and injured are in the rest centres.) It may be remarked here that, for the most part, the rest centres are occupied by the poorer people. They predominate, their houses are built more closely together and are frequently inferior in construction, they live in the more vulnerable areas, and they cannot make the same use of the "Come Right In Society" as those who are in better circumstances. Hence, the work of the information officer at the rest centre goes beyond direction and becomes welfare.

Branch Information Centres.—There will be six branch information centres, which are partially administrative in character. Their purpose is to take the weight of the most common inquiries. They will be able to record details of damage to property; receive applications for billeting; distribute the official forms, such as those required by the War Damage Act; display casualty lists; and take particulars of missing persons. A representative of the assistance board and of the food control will also be in attendance. Provision has also been made that in cases where an inquiry cannot be answered on the spot, and

it would be a hardship for the inquirer to travel, the inquiry will be forwarded to the main information centre and answered by letter. At each of these branch information centres there will be a centre leader, supported by three members of the library staff, four volunteers from the Council of Social Service and four messengers; there will also be two cars in attendance for any emergency that may arise.

The branch information centres will obviously be situated in the heavily populated districts, and are better placed on the town side of such districts than on the perimeter side. The buildings selected should provide adequate cover for the public. At the busiest times queues are unavoidable. They are not invariably a sign of inefficiency, but may be a positive sign that the maximum use is being made of the available staffs. What must be ensured is that the wait is not unduly protracted and that it is made under cover. It scarcely needs stating at this time that alternative accommodation should be earmarked. A stock of the various stationery items and special forms are at each branch information centre, together with large notice boards announcing the setting up of the centre.

Main Information Centre.—The main information centre is the focal point of the various information services. It is housed in the large central library, which is eminently suitable for the purpose, and is in the centre of the city near the other administrative offices. It is administrative in character, and the main government and municipal departments are represented; there is a welfare department to deal generally with all problems outside the scope of any other service, and particularly with the needs of those who, immediately after a raid, find their way to the information centre and need food and shelter. Military liaison officers will be present to deal with servicemen, and the Council of Social Service with the dependants of servicemen.

The "Searcher Service"

There is a special department for tracing missing relatives. Its importance develops as the sum of a geometrical series according to the extent and dislocation caused by the raids. The system is based partially on a large central index and on the searcher service. At each rest centre a card record is made of all persons admitted. This is sent immediately to the main information centre, to form the basis of an index of the movement of population, which is kept up to date by records of billeting and evacuation. This index, however, does not contain any record of those who have been voluntarily billeted or evacuated, unless they have applied for allowances; nor does it record those who have not had to leave their homes. Yet many inquiries from commanding officers concerning the near relatives of local men under their charge, and from relatives outside the town, relate to those who are well and living in their own homes. There is, moreover, a time lag in making out the card at the rest centre and its receipt at the main information centre.

Hence the need for the searcher service. It consists of a large number of secondary school boys with bicycles who, if the index fails to give the necessary information, visit the addresses of those about whom inquiries have been made. It will be apparent that a high standard of intelligence is required for this work. The triumphs of deduction achieved by these lads, the anxiety they allay, and the light-hearted enthusiasm with which they do their work, constitute one of the many evidences that there is still a strong desire to serve, which merely awaits the opportunity.

The system of direction adopted in the main information centre is two-fold; there are specially trained guides to direct and advise people as they come in, and a large notice is

displayed in the main hall showing what services are available and in which room they are situated. Above each service in the various rooms is a large card showing prominently the name of the department. In addition, there are facilities for rest and food; these are particularly necessary in the early days after a raid when people may have to wait a considerable time.

The control of all the information services is established at the main information centre. Inquiries which cannot be dealt with at the rest centres or branch information centres are forwarded there and the person concerning



"Aren't we rather overdoing this 'safety in height' business, Hans?"

whom the inquiry was made is notified by post or messenger. A special record of inquiries is kept at the main and branch information centres and at the rest centres, and difficult cases are specially recorded, so that any lack of facilities can be rectified.

That is the formal scheme of the information service, but in the background are those such as wardens, police, ministers, senior government officers, trade union officials, works welfare officers, W.V.S., teachers, etc., to whom the public are likely to turn for guidance.

Training System

The degree of training naturally depends on the nature of the duties to be performed. The welfare department at the main information centre requires the greatest knowledge and experience, and the staff here is permanently on this work. The leaders at the branch information centres come next, and reasonably require a more detailed knowledge than their staffs. But these staffs, in turn, must be better informed generally than, say, the police, wardens, W.V.S., etc. It is sufficient if the latter know the scope of the information service, together with a broad outline of the duties of the various government and municipal departments which are represented at the main information centre. The second group has to know something of the technique—how and to whom to apply for compensation; what grant will be made for the removal of furniture and in what circumstances; the various types of pensions and how those who have lost their books may obtain new ones; and so on. All this knowledge, together with a general knowledge of the rest centre organisation, emergency committee decisions, how to obtain petrol supplies for the volunteer car drivers, and, above all, a capacity to act independently should the occasion require it, are needed by the branch information centre leaders.

To this end, training was regarded as consisting of five main phases:

Phase 1 was a series of eleven lectures given by heads of the appropriate government and municipal departments outlining the broad scheme. The audience consisted of teachers, W.V.S., information staffs, etc.

Phase 2 was the systematic training of the branch information centre leaders by the officer in charge of the permanent information bureau. Here, the group for instruction was a small one, consisting of eight people selected for their intelligence and adaptability; the training was detailed and intensive, admitting of considerable discussion.

Phase 3 arrived when the branch information centre leaders began to train their respective staffs. By this arrangement, the centre leaders made their own knowledge secure and realised its imperfections; they became acquainted with their staffs; and they established their positions as leaders. Parallel with Phase 2 was a series of lectures to rest centre information officers. Duplicated instructions and revised decisions have been and continue to be issued to all the above, except those in Phase 1.

Phase 4 is at present in operation, in the form of test mobilisations.

"Where to Go" Guide

The fifth phase concerns the "Where to go" guide. This is a handy alphabetical guide with appropriate references. Its object is two-fold: it will act as an aid to digestion for those who have been trained but have had no opportunity as yet in field work. Distributed as it has been to wardens, police, bank managers, clergymen, works welfare officers, senior government officials, and all others who, as a result of their official positions, are likely to be asked for help, it will create, as it were, a large number of miniature information centres.

The booklet is stoutly bound to withstand considerable handling. Addresses are given on a single sheet at the end so that, if there are any alterations, a revised sheet can be issued without affecting the guide as a whole. Provision has been made for all the addresses given in the guide to be visited on the morning following a heavy raid to ensure that any necessary revision may be done quickly and comprehensively. Envelopes, ready addressed, wait to take any revisions to all those who have received copies.

Too much stress cannot be laid on training. Wrong information is worse than no information. There have been too many paper schemes which have ignored this primary requirement. How many people, reasonably well informed, can distinguish between the assistance board and public assistance? How many see clearly the distinction between Parts I and II of the War Damage Act? When the Ministry of Pensions makes a misleading statement on burial allowances, is it surprising that few people understand that this department has nothing to do with old age pensions? How many people distinguish clearly between evacuation and billeting? (the very words themselves are strange and do not even suggest their official meaning). Yet, after heavy raids the information services have to be staffed in the main by those whose day-to-day work is but remotely related to their temporary occupation; to them, the administration of central government, far from being a coherent plan, is something of a surrealistic nightmare. A frank realisation of this will save difficulties later on. Unity of control, flexibility, staff training—these are the three primary requirements in the organisation of information services.

Pre-educating the Public

A further problem for those who have to organise an information service is the pre-education of the public. The problem is one which is more easily stated than solved. Many people read, few read intelligently, and fewer still retain what they read. In any case, it is natural for people to assume that whatever

WALSALL LEADS THE WAY IN MUTUAL BILLETING

The value of the mutual billeting scheme, under which householders arrange before a raid to go to the home of a friend in the neighbourhood should they be bombed out has been fully demonstrated: it means greater relief and comfort for the bomb victims, reduces the strain on rest centres, and helps to preserve the entity of a town in the difficult after-raid period. The Minister of Health has repeatedly urged local authorities to encourage such schemes, and has twice mentioned the good work done in Sheffield and Walsall. This article describes Walsall's pioneer achievement.

THE encouragement of mutual billeting arrangements was urged on local authorities in a circular issued by the regional offices of the Ministry of Health in May, and the Walsall emergency committee tackled the matter in earnest in June. Wardens and members of street fire parties delivered the forms and explanatory notes to each house in the borough. The wardens explained the proposal at the time of delivery. They visited each house again later to collect the forms which had been completed, and to exercise further persuasion where the desired arrangements had not been made. Where it was clear that, despite the failure to complete the form, the householder would do so if given a little more time, a third visit was made.

All householders were urged to make their arrangements with some relative or friend living at least half a mile away. This is fundamental, since arrangements made with a householder in the immediate vicinity are likely to be of little value, owing to the probability of both parties being rendered homeless on the same night. Householders were also urged to

deposit with the person agreeing to accommodate them a bag or suitcase containing sufficient clothing to meet immediate needs should their personal effects be destroyed. Up to the middle of September, about seventy per cent of the forms had been collected, showing that householders generally have responded well to the appeal.

A vacant corner shop in the centre of the town has been taken as headquarters for the organisation of the scheme, which it is hoped to extend to every house in the borough. Here, a staff of voluntary workers from the wardens' service, the W.V.S., and other civil defence services, are now preparing a register of returns received. This register is on a street basis, the street dossiers being grouped according to sectors. The complete register will be passed to the billeting officer, and appropriate sections lodged with the sector wardens, who will be able to ascertain immediately the mutual aid arrangements made by the residents in their area. The preparation of the register serves also to draw immediate attention to the cases where no arrangements have been made, and facilitates



"That's a record—we've held his breath for ten minutes!"

the preparation of lists of premises requiring a further visit.

The visiting in each locality is carried out by W.V.S. housewives and by wardens. Should it be necessary to operate the scheme, it is intended to provide transport for the aged and infirm from the wardens' car pool.

In addition, the headquarters shop is used for further publicity for the scheme, and is serving a most useful purpose in stimulating public interest and affording a point of contact with householders. There is reason to believe that some members of the public prefer the atmosphere of a bureau such as this to the necessarily more formal atmosphere of the town hall, and arrangements have therefore been made for the Citizens' Advice Bureau to be represented, since not all the inquiries received relate to mutual accommodation arrangements. Full advantage has been taken of the publicity value of the shop windows for displays giving instruction on fire-bomb fighting and the care of stirrup pumps, respirators, and other equipment. The interest shown in these displays make it clear that the public mind is very alert to civil defence matters generally.

The voluntary workers who staff the bureau were recently honoured by a visit from the Minister of Home Security and the Regional Commissioner during the Minister's tour of the Midland area.

Emergency Cooking Demonstrations

A further development which is making rapid headway in Walsall is in public demonstrations of emergency cooking. The first was given in the Arboretum early in September, when members of the emergency cookery training centre, No. 12 Pioneer Corps, erected and cooked on improvised ovens. Various types, considered most suitable for use in an emergency—biscuit tin oven, hole in the ground, drum oven, kettle trench, and improvised hay boxes—were demonstrated, and here again public interest was keen.

After the public demonstration, arrangements were made for further courses of instruction in the erection and use of these field kitchens to be given to wardens from every part of the borough. Should heavy raiding occur, and gas and electricity services not be available for some time afterwards, the wardens will be able to add to their already great achievements in playing the part of the "good neighbour." To supplement their work, members of the W.V.S. and the Civic Guild of Help are also receiving instruction in the use of the field kitchens.

SHEFFIELD AND BLITZINFORMATION

(Continued from preceding page.)

happens to their city will not affect them; no one likes to dwell on the possibility of extinction or disablement, or even the loss of cherished possessions. It is likely, therefore, that printed material issued to the population in advance, unless of the simplest kind, will be ignored. Clearly, the information service should be designed mainly to operate after a raid, and it should largely envisage the need for dealing with verbal requests for information. It is not suggested, of course, that pre-education should not be undertaken, but its limitations should be realised. Posters have been used, and the one designed by the Ministry of Information entitled "Help After the Raid" is tastefully produced and appealing. Films may be a partial solution, but the cost makes this a national rather than a local matter.

It was felt, however, that if the wardens' service and the local fire fighting parties, together with the housewives' service, could be persuaded to discuss information matters, then the beginning of pre-education would have been achieved because they, in turn, would discuss with those who were taking no active part in civil defence. For this reason, a pamphlet entitled "After the Raid" has been prepared, which sets out in simple language the various services and what they provide. It has been sent to all civil defence workers with the request that they should consider and discuss it, make a note of the points on which they were not clear, and then invite a member of the permanent information bureau to attend one of their meetings so that difficulties could be overcome. The result so far shows a growing interest in the subject, but it requires a missionary ardour on the part of the permanent officer at the information bureau to continue, night after night, attending these meetings. Copies of the "After the Raid" pamphlet are also available at all public offices, and there are copies for distribution at rest centres.

Looking Ahead

It is characteristic of the present war that no sooner does planning overtake surprise, than new circumstances arise which demand new organisation. Hence, some attempt must be made to look forward. The development of the cushion belt will mean that information must be taken to the people who go outside the city. In these circumstances, information officers at rest centres are indispensable. Mobile vans, or, alternatively, marques which can be erected on any convenient site, are desirable. A greater freedom of initiative for the larger and more competent local authorities is also required. There should be a body of observers to attend and report on experience gained in major raids, to ensure that other areas will not be left in ignorance of the latest form of enemy activity. Some attempt might be made to conduct an information service at the larger firms in the town so that the men engaged on war production might have their questions answered during working hours and so avoid having to take time off to attend at one of the information centres.

In local government and other walks of life, it is common to find that men in power guard their power jealously and strive to increase it. If such a spirit exists and is allowed to persist, then a sensible, well-organised, and effective information service is unlikely to be realised. The organisation in Sheffield could not have been done without the gracious spirit displayed each to the other by the chairman of the emergency committee, the public welfare officer, and the city librarian. It could not have been done without the goodwill of most other departments, national and local. The story here is a happy one, and the spirit it shows a sure guarantee that even if the best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley, there is a determination behind this scheme that, come what will, information and help shall be given to the citizen.

232 BLITZ EDUCATION IN BRIGHTON

Two cardinal points made by Tom Harrisson were the need for pre-education of the public before a blitz, and the importance of having information services on the spot after a blitz. Brighton has been a pioneer in both aspects of this work, and Mr. A. J. Mortimer here describes its preparations for the future.

BRIGHTON'S A.R.P. controller and his liaison officer decided to take advantage of the lull in air attack to educate the public in the services available to them after raids, and, in particular, to stress the arrangements for setting up a temporary inquiry office close to every bomb-damaged area. Many instances in the past have shown the need for this publicity work, from the point of view both of the public and of the authorities. For example, in one raid much time was spent by rescue workers digging for a woman who was supposed to be under some wreckage. It was later found that she was not at home when the raid occurred, and discovering what had happened, had gone to stay with friends. Pre-education would have brought home to her that help was available and that she ought to notify the authorities of her escape and her new address.

In Brighton, these temporary offices are termed liaison and inquiry offices, serving the double purpose of assisting the public and providing a contact point for all workers on the spot. They have been described as "Town Halls in Miniature," but they are more than that, for they bring in services which are normally unconnected with the town hall, such as the assistance board. A permanent office is established in the same building as the Citizens Advice Bureau. It was decided to equip vacant premises in central parts of the town, opening them for a few days only to publicise the service. Empty shops were used, with informative and striking window displays, the interior of the shops being equipped as typical liaison and inquiry offices. Crowds of people have been attracted, many inquiries have been made, and there must be hundreds who are now familiar with the yellow and black sign which is always used, and the special helmet worn by the staff.

Although this publicity work is so important that it would merit a large expense, it has so far cost practically nothing. Shop premises have been loaned by public-spirited traders, and free publicity on the cinema screen has been given. The window displays were designed and carried

out by liaison staff. These, incidentally, are mostly local government officers, representing their normal departments, aided by volunteers

BOOKS WANTED!

All new copies having been "blitzed" the NALGO Correspondence Institute wishes to buy second-hand copies of THE RELIEVING OFFICERS' HANDBOOK, by Moss (Hadden Best & Co.). A price of 8s. 6d. will be paid for copies in good condition, and postage will be refunded. Send offers only in the first place to : NALGO Correspondence Institute, Croyde, Braunton, Devon.

who are largely recruited from the municipal service, and who, in consequence, do much of the work in their spare time.

FIRST MOBILE ADVICE BUREAU

The authors of the Sheffield article stress the need for mobile vans to take information to bomb victims who have left the city. The National Council of Social Service has recognised this need and, with the aid of the F.A.U., has equipped the first mobile advice bureau—the first, it is hoped, of many.

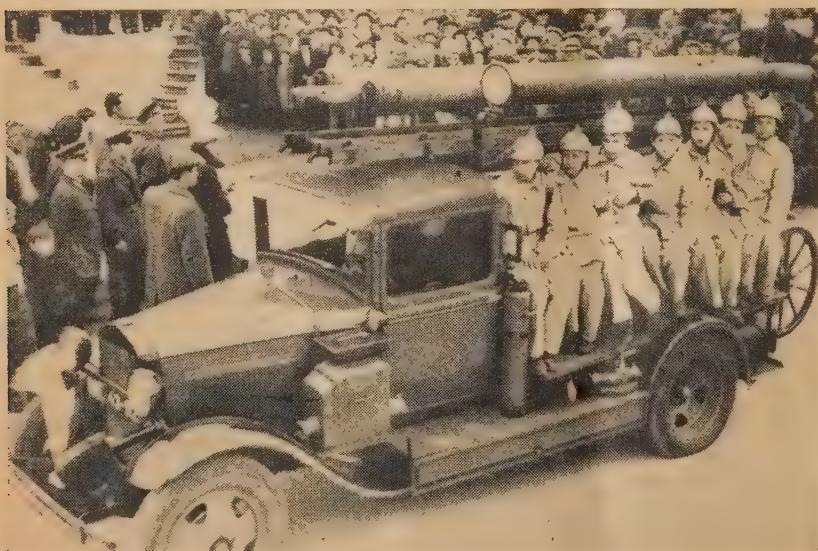
THE mobile bureau has been presented to the National Council by the British War Relief Society, and was handed over by Mr. Gilbert Carr, on behalf of Mr. B. Cruger, of the British War Relief Society, on September 8.

It is a former motor horse-box, ingeniously converted by members of the Friends Ambulance Unit to provide an office equipped with chairs and tables for service as a bureau during the day, and bunks and a kitchenette to house the emergency squad of four, who are to man the bureau, at night. This squad is being provided by members of the F.A.U., who have been undergoing a special training course in C.A.B. work. In addition, the van is accompanied by a private car.

The operation of this bureau supplements the National Council's other machinery for ensuring that all heavily raided areas have the most efficient C.A.B. service available as soon as possible after the raid. Most local authorities are now incorporating in their plans for information or administrative centres, provision for the C.A.B. to work as part of the official post-blitz arrangements. The National Council of Social Service, through its regional officers, is able to bring into effect mutual assistance schemes by which additional workers can be secured from other bureaux for the district where assistance is most needed. The mobile bureau will now extend this scheme by providing in the outlying villages a service of advice and information to those who have arrived there distressed and bewildered, having left behind them a multitude of unsolved problems which are a considerable source of anxiety.

On receipt of information that a serious attack has occurred and that the services of the mobile unit are required, an advance party will set out ahead in the car to make contact with the local bureau workers and local authorities, and obtain all the necessary local information, such as the addresses of the various departments of the statutory authorities and particularly any special regulations in force or other relevant information. The car will be followed by the van which will, in addition to its own crew, pick up bureau workers familiar with the district in which the bureau is to operate, and also with the town from which the evacuees have come. The van will then move about in the district outside the target area, according to the need.

This mobile service should help not only people who have come out of the target area but also the residents of the reception area whose own problems are complicated by the sudden influx of a large new population into their midst. Thus it is hoped that many who have already suffered much will be spared a great deal of unhappiness through the prompt provision of accurate information and wise and sympathetic advice.



Boys play their part in Russia's civil defence—like these gallant young fire-fighters in a Moscow display.

Reconstruction Committee Set up

A Square Deal for Nurses

Bolton Case Aftermath

Recruitment of Temporaries

THE National Executive Council is to examine the possibility of holding a NALGO Conference next year, if necessary in a modified form, and, if practicable, an election for the council and officers.

This was one of many important decisions reached at a meeting of the National Executive Council held at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on September 13. Other items in a full and varied agenda included the constitution and

proportion of the membership in the Forces; but again, the council felt that an election should be held if at all possible. The whole question was, therefore, referred to the emergency executive, which was instructed to prepare plans for a conference and to consider the machinery for an election. The emergency executive was also instructed to consider, in the light of recent discussions in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, how closer liaison between branches, district committees, and the National Executive Council might be secured.

Reconstruction Committee.—The report of the sub-committee appointed to make recommendations on the constitution and terms of reference of the proposed NALGO Reconstruction Committee was adopted with minor amendments.

Taking the view that any attempt by NALGO to survey the whole field of reconstruction as it affected local government would involve undesirable overlapping with the many other bodies considering the question, the report suggested that the NALGO committee should approach the problem as an administrative one to which it would advance the solutions suggested by local government officers as practical administrators. To avoid the danger that the recommendations of any NALGO committee might be regarded as influenced by occupational interests, the report held it to be essential that:

The committee should consist of outstanding personalities in the local government service, selected solely on the ground of their personal qualifications and experience and without regard to their positions in NALGO;

It should be independent of the National Executive Council, which should have no power to amend or select from its recommendations;

Its conclusions should be based on a wide view of the problem, disregarding all departmental, sectional, or local authority interests which might run counter to the reform of local administration on the most efficient and practical basis.

A list of fifteen names of officers who might be invited to serve on the committee was approved by the council. In view, however, of the fact that these officers have not yet formally signified their willingness to sit, the list cannot be published immediately; it will be published as soon as the committee is properly constituted. They had been chosen, the report explained, as officers of outstanding authority within the service and capable of taking a wide view of its needs as a whole. While they had not been selected as representatives of particular departments, types of authority, or geographical areas, the subcommittee had kept in mind the need to have, upon the Reconstruction Committee officers experienced in the various branches of local government, and every type of local authority and most branches of municipal activity were in fact covered by the names submitted.

The following terms of reference were approved:

To examine the present functions, structure, finance, and machinery of local government in the United Kingdom and to propose alterations or improvements calculated to promote its greater efficiency and effectiveness in operation, such inquiry and recommendations to include:

- (i) Administrative areas;
- (ii) The departmental distribution of functions;

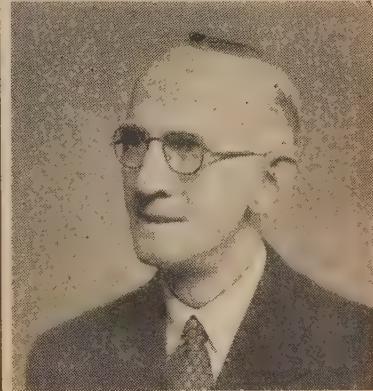
(iii) The working of the different types of local authority and the operation of the committee system;

(iv) The relations between local government and central government and between local government and the community;

(v) Public utility services;

(vi) Personnel.

RETired



Mr. T. FREEMAN

who has left the N.E.C. on his retirement on superannuation. Mr. Freeman has represented the North-Western and North Wales district committee on the council since 1927, at the last election securing 15,000 votes—87 per cent of those cast and a record in NALGO history. Recognised as a keen and constructive critic and as possessor of one of the ablest financial brains within the Association, he has been chairman of the finance committees of both the district committee and the N.E.C. and a trustee of the Association. In his own area he has played a leading part in securing better service conditions and, apart from a short period, has been a member of the Manchester local joint committee for 21 years.

Mr. Freeman has spent more than 40 years in municipal service, since 1909 with Manchester corporation, where he became chief accountant in the city treasurer's department. He has been an associate member of the Institute of Municipal Treasurers and Accountants since 1911 and has for long taken an active interest in the North-Western Students' Society of that body, serving for periods as hon. secretary and president.

These terms of reference, the report emphasised, were deliberately made wide and general and should not be regarded as exclusive. The committee should be left free to formulate its own programme of inquiry and to direct its attention along whatever avenues it thought appropriate.

Finally, the N.E.C. agreed to empower the committee to regulate its own procedure, to take the views, written or oral, of persons within or outside the service whose opinions it considered to be of value, and to incur expenses. It will be required to submit its reports and recommendations to the council, which will be free to decide what action is to be taken upon them, but not to amend them.

ELEVATED



Mr. A. A. GARRARD

Chairman of the N.E.C. since 1938, who has now been elected junior vice-president of NALGO. Mr. Garrard, who is secretary for education at East Ham, has had an outstanding career in NALGO, which he joined in 1905. He was elected to the branch executive in 1919, and has served as branch secretary, branch chairman, headquarters correspondent, chairman of the staff side, and vice-chairman of the local joint committee. He is also chairman of the Metropolitan district committee, having sat on the executive since 1924, and is in his thirteenth year of service on the N.E.C., where he has played a leading part in the national campaign on salaries and the extension of Whitleyism. An enthusiast for social services, Mr. Garrard has represented the Association on the National Council of Social Service, the local Government Advisory Council, and the Poor Law Examinations Board. During the last war he served with the H.A.C. in Egypt and Palestine.

terms of reference of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee, the recruitment of temporary officers, improvement of the position of nurses in the local government service, the extension of Whitleyism, and action to rectify the difficult position created by the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the Bolton case. Decisions of the Council on these and other points were as follows:—

Conference and Elections.—The council was unanimous in its desire to hold a conference, or the nearest approach to one that circumstances might permit. It was agreed that, while the decision against holding a conference this year was a correct one in the conditions then expected, the need for direct contact between the branches and the National Executive Council was becoming urgent. The holding of a ballot election for the council presented greater difficulties with so large a

Temporary Officers.—Much discussion arose on a recommendation of the service conditions and organisation sub-committee that district committee secretaries and the organising staff be asked to make a "drive" to enrol into membership all temporary officers employed by local authorities. Several members pointed out that their branches had decided not to enrol temporary officers, on the ground that to admit to membership persons who were unlikely to remain long in the local government service would weaken the Association. The admission of temporary officers, it was argued, would create a conflict after the war, when they would expect the Association to help them to retain their positions in competition with members demobilised from the Forces; it would reverse all the progress made by N A L G O in securing for the service higher standards of education and qualifications and in abolishing nepotism and patronage; it would prejudice promotion and efficiency; and it would create difficulties for the ancillaries. Supporters of the proposal, on the other hand, emphasised the dangers of excluding from N A L G O large numbers of officers, some of whom would remain in the service after the war, and who, if deprived of the Association's protection, might be forced to accept salaries and conditions which would have a depressing effect upon the service as a whole. The fear of a conflict of interest after the war between "temporaries" and officers returning from the Forces could be avoided were it made clear to the "temporaries" admitted to membership that the Association's first duty was to its members on war service.

The council accepted this latter view, and approved the recommendation for a drive to enrol temporary officers, provided they were admitted on the clear understanding that the Association would take no action on their behalf which would conflict with the interests of its existing members, including those now in the Forces.

Nurses' Salaries.—It was reported that a N A L G O deputation to the Ministry of Health on August 8 was informed that the Minister had decided, owing to the dislocation of the hospital services, to form a single joint committee to deal with the salaries of nursing staffs. There would be two panels, each of twenty members. The employers' panel would consist of representatives of the local authorities' associations, the L.C.C., and the Voluntary Hospitals Association, and the staffs panel of representatives of nursing staffs, in proportion to membership. There would be an independent chairman, and the influence of the Government would be behind the committee's recommendations.

The N A L G O deputation objected strongly to this proposal, pointing out that there was already in existence the Local Authorities' Nursing Services Joint Committee which had been dealing for some time with nurses' salaries and conditions and the machinery of which could be simply extended to cover all nurses, including those employed in the voluntary hospitals, and urging that nothing should be done which would jeopardise existing Whitley machinery. The Ministry, however, refused to agree to this contention, holding that the present Whitley machinery was not truly representative of local authorities, since the associations of local authorities did not recognise it. Nevertheless, the Minister would give an assurance that he would do nothing to interfere with the development of the Whitley Council system, and intended personally to explain his views to representatives of the Nursing Services joint committee of the National Whitley Council and to define what he regarded its functions to be.

Despite further representations by N A L G O, the Minister had refused to vary his decision, and the Association had now to decide whether or not it would agree to sit

upon the Minister's new committee. Although several members of the council wished to stand aloof, and none welcomed the Minister's proposals, it was eventually decided to agree to representation, on the understanding that the committee would deal with salaries only and that service conditions and other questions would be left in the hands of the Nursing Services Joint Committee.

It was further reported that N A L G O had made strong representations to the Minister on the effect of Circular 2340, in which he had merely exhorted local authorities to review nurses' salaries in the light of the new rates

RESIGNED

Mr. G. A. STONE, controller of the local taxation department, Worcester county council, has resigned from the N.E.C. on taking over, for the duration of the war, full-time duties as captain and adjutant of the Worcester City Battalion of the Home Guard.

Mr. Stone, who has represented the West Midlands district on the council since 1933, is also president of the Worcester county council branch, chairman of the West Midlands Benevolent and Orphan Fund sub-committee, and a member of the West Midlands provincial Whitley council. A ready and able speaker, with a great enthusiasm for N A L G O, and a man in whom the art of friendship is highly developed, Mr. Stone has made himself popular with all N A L G O members he has met, and his temporary absence will be a serious loss, nationally and locally.

of the Civil Nursing Reserve, and had suggested lower salaries for permanent assistant nurses and trained nurses in municipal employ on the ground that they were superannuated. It was pointed out that:

- (1) While some authorities had improved salaries in response to the Minister's appeal, others would not do so. This, combined with the competition of the Minister of Labour, who was offering high salaries for industrial nurses, was creating a chaotic position. N A L G O believed that nurses should have national conditions at least equal to those of teachers;
- (2) N A L G O protested strongly against the view that superannuation was equivalent to "deferred pay" and should be taken into account in comparing salaries.

The Bolton Judgment.—The council devoted much time to consideration of the effect of the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the Bolton case, which was also the subject of two district committee resolutions—one from North Western and North Wales urging an appeal to the House of Lords, and the other from South Western calling for strong representations for the amendment of the National Arbitration and Conditions of Employment Order.

That order, it was explained, was designed to be a charter for industry, enabling employees to get any difference with their employers settled through joint negotiating machinery, and where that failed, through a decision of the National Arbitration Tribunal. N A L G O was told, before it was published, that it was to apply to local government as it applied to industry. But the judgment in the Bolton case, and defects in the Order itself, had left very little for the local government service.

The judgment of the Court of Appeal was unanimous upon two points:

- (a) The Order cannot be applied to compel a local authority to do anything which Parliament has left within its discretion;
- (b) the decision of a local authority to make up the war service pay of an employee under the Local Government Staffs (War Service) Act fails to be made only when the employee joins the Forces, and general resolutions to make up pay, such as have been adopted by

approximately 1180 local authorities are, therefore, *ultra vires*.

In addition, one or other of the three judges had made certain *obiter dicta* suggesting that:

- (a) A difference between a trade union and a local authority is not a trade dispute, and, therefore, cannot be referred to the National Arbitration Tribunal;
- (b) The order was intended to apply only where a strike was in fact apprehended; and
- (c) There was doubt as to whether many N A L G O members were workmen within the meaning of the order, and whether, therefore, it could be applied to them;

N A L G O had already sent a deputation to the Minister of Health to ask for legislation to make valid all general resolutions to make up pay, and had received considerable satisfaction on that point. It was agreed to send a deputation to the Minister of Labour to point out that the Order had failed in its purpose so far as the local government service was concerned and to call for its amendment, and the emergency committee was empowered to take the case to the House of Lords if necessary.

Essential Work Order.—This also had been the subject of a deputation to the Ministry of Health. The deputation pointed out that local government officers in undertakings scheduled under the Order would be subjected to all its disadvantages, in that they would be "tied down" in their jobs, but, since there were no "recognised conditions" in the local government service, would be denied its safeguards guaranteeing minimum standards and conditions of service based on collective agreements. This was a further argument for the speedy adoption of compulsory Whitleyism, and the point is to be raised with the Minister of Labour. In the meantime, wherever the order is applied to officers whose conditions of service are below the standard adopted by the appropriate provincial Whitley Council, protests are to be made to the local officers of the Ministry of Labour.

Financing of Holiday Centres.—In July, the Leeds branch published and circulated to the N.E.C. and to district committees a memorandum on the financing of the N A L G O holiday centres and the treatment of the reserve fund. In this, the branch alleged that whereas in 1925 the Association possessed a reserve fund of £45,205, safely invested and readily available, in 1939 the bulk of its reserve fund of £84,555 was "immobilised in speculative ventures" i.e. the holiday centres and Cefn-y-Mynach private hotel—leaving only £10,472, as a reserve immediately available in case of need. In addition to condemning the investment of the Association's reserves in ventures of this kind, the memorandum pointed out that no depreciation had been charged in the account of Cefn-y-Mynach since its acquisition, and expressed doubt of the accuracy of the balance sheet valuation of this and of the two holiday centres, upon which there was in 1939 an accumulated deficit of £5,508.

This memorandum was fully considered at a special meeting of the Special Activities Committee on September 12, at which it was pointed out that:

- (a) Freehold land is one of the safest securities available for investment to-day.
- (b) The Leeds memorandum ignored the fact that, to the end of 1939, the holiday centres had repaid £27,404 of the capital borrowed and in addition had paid £14,093 in interest—representing an average rate of 4½ per cent—to N A L G O.
- (c) The Association could immediately raise a sum of £30,335 by the transfer from the Provident Society of the purchase price of its properties in Abingdon Street, and
- (d) The "deficiency" shown in the balance sheet was a paper deficiency only and could be converted into a surplus by a very slight increase in the charges to visitors to the holiday centres.

Many Big Problems Before NALGO 235 Consultative Committee

The council accepted the report of the special activities committee as a basis for a reply to the Leeds branch, and resolved that the charge of reckless spending made in the Leeds memorandum be strongly refuted.

Affiliation to the T.U.C.—A number of resolutions from branches and district committees, some supporting and others criticising the action of the N.E.C. on this question were reported. It was decided to refer them all to the emergency executive with the suggestion that it should send a considered reply to each critical resolution.

Building Society.—In a report on the work of the NALGO Building Society, it was revealed that, as a result of the restriction on new business combined with satisfactory repayments, an overdraft of nearly £366,000 in November, 1939, had been converted into a credit balance of nearly £23,000 in August, 1941. In view of this satisfactory position, the committee of management had decided in June to reopen new mortgage business. It was now prepared in approved cases to make advances to enable members to buy houses for their personal occupation. The advances, repayable over 20 years might be up to 75 per cent of the present value, or of the value in March, 1939, or of the purchase price, whichever was the lower. The rate of interest would be 5 per cent. In view of the heavy increases in taxation and of the society's contribution under the War Damage Act—which had already increased its costs to £45,000 a year above what they would have been but for the war—it would be necessary, from January 1 next, to reduce the rate of interest on shares from 3 to 2½ per cent and on deposits from 2½ per cent to 2 per cent. This, however, would be free of income-tax, which represented a good yield to-day. This reduction in interest rates should produce a surplus of approximately £20,000 next year, to meet further possible increases in taxation. Having in mind the many difficulties brought by the war, the committee regarded the position as thoroughly satisfactory—an opinion with which the council heartily agreed.

New Vice-President.—Mr. A. A. Garrard, chairman of the council, was unanimously elected junior vice-president of NALGO in the place of Mr. A. G. M. Archibald, who has resigned as a result of ill-health. High tribute was paid to Mr. Garrard's long and splendid record of service to the Association.

Resignations.—Mr. T. Freeman announced his resignation as Trustee and member of the N.E.C. on his retirement from the local government service, and Mr. G. A. Stone announced that he had recently been gazetted to a regular commission as captain and adjutant in the Home Guard, which would involve his resignation from the council for the duration of the war. Warm tributes were paid to the work of both these members, and it was agreed to invite the North Western and North Wales and the Midlands and South Wales District Committees to appoint new members to take their places.

New Trustees.—Messrs. A. Pinches, A. G. Bolton and G. Llewellyn, were elected trustees of the Association in the place of Messrs. J. T. Baker, T. Freeman, and A. G. M. Archibald.

Death of Mrs. G. Franks.—The council stood for a moment in silence as a tribute of respect to the late Mrs. Gertrude Franks, the first, and for many years its only woman member, who died on July 13.

Mr. A. A. Garrard, chairman of the council, presided, and those present at an exceptionally well-attended meeting included : Messrs. R. Adams, H. Allen, H. J. Altron, J. T. Baker, W. A. N. Baker, W. R. Beever, L. Bevan, A. G. Bolton, S. H. Brodie, J. Brown, J. Chaston, A. Clark, R. W. Coppock, F. E. Cox, E. R. Davies, Miss E. Dawson, Messrs. A. B. Day, W. O. Dodd, J. Y. Fawcett, T. Freeman, A. A. Garrard, D. L. Griffiths, F. H. Harrold, P. H. Harrold, R. E. Heron, J. L. Holland, H. A. Jury, W. H. Legh-Smith, G. Llewellyn, S. Lord, E. H. Mason, C. J. Newman, T. Nolan, A. Denton Ogden, A. Pinches, E. L. Riley, C. A. W. Roberts, H. Russell, R. T. Shears, E. J. Stead, G. A. Stone, H. Taylor, L. H. Taylor, J. H. Tyrrell, J. W. Vince, J. H. Warren, R. Williams, E. A. S. Young.

THE National Executive Council meeting was preceded by a meeting of the NALGO Consultative Committee (hitherto known as the Standing Joint Committee)—a body consisting of representatives of 32 sectional and professional societies and of the N.E.C., formed to consider problems of common interest and to maintain contact between professional groups and the main association. The meeting was the first to be held since the outbreak of war, and the agenda in consequence was a heavy one. Topics discussed included :

National Arbitration Order.—Mr. P. H. HARROLD, NALGO honorary solicitor for England, explained the present position in relation to the Order and the National Arbitration Tribunal as it had been affected by the judgment in the Bolton case, and gave an assurance that NALGO was doing everything possible to secure that the benefits of the Order were made applicable to local government.

Commenting on the view of Mr. Justice Bennett that a trade union could not, in its own name, take a dispute before the tribunal, Mr. W. H. DRAPER, Sanitary Inspectors' Association, asked whether NALGO could not arrange for counsel to represent an individual. Mr. Harrold explained that this could be done, and would be done if necessary. A difficulty, however, was that individual officers did not like to enter into public dispute with their authorities, fearing personal repercussions.

Essential Work Order.—After Mr. Harrold had outlined the object and operation of this Order, Mr. J. Moss, Local Government Clerks, expressed the hope that NALGO would not resist its application to certain branches of local government. The position today was that some departments would be unable to carry on unless the Order were applied. NALGO's job was to see that the workers' secured proper wages and conditions. Mr. R. H. STOREY, Institute of Public Cleansing, pointed out that the Order provided a glorious opportunity of saying to local authorities and the Ministry of Labour: "We are prepared to support the application of the Order, provided you agree to that complete system of Whitleyism for which we have been fighting."

Mr. R. W. RAMSAY (N.A.A.L.G.E.) raised the problem of institutions, which today were competing to get one another's staffs, and Mr. E. F. COWARD, National Association of Cemetery and Crematorium Superintendents, declared that those dealing with manual staff were at a disadvantage with private enterprise, which could offer higher wages.

Mr. J. L. HOLLAND, Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education, stressed the danger—implicit in the remarks of Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Coward—of using the Order to keep down wages. They must be careful to do nothing likely to stereotype the low scales of salary some authorities were paying. Mr. Harrold agreed, arguing that it was the association's job to look after NALGO members, not to help maintain low salaries. Their policy today should be that, while agreeing that competition for staff between local authorities was wrong in wartime, nothing should be allowed to prevent a man leaving one authority for a better job under another.

Whitleyism.—Mr. H. ALLEN, NALGO, outlined the progress made recently in the extension of Whitleyism in local government ; the whole country was now covered by fifteen provincial councils, all working under the aegis of the National Whitley Council, and of those fifteen, eleven had issued salary and grading schemes and conditions of service, while the remaining four were expected to do so shortly. Every provincial council had endorsed the recommendations of the National Council

on cost-of-living bonus, and approximately 60,000 officers throughout the country were now enjoying the benefits of that award.

Mr. RAMSAY, N.A.A.L.G.E., while congratulating NALGO on the progress made, especially in dealing with administrative staffs, complained that some sections of the service were not adequately covered by grading schemes.

Mr. E. C. MERCER, Incorporated Society of Inspectors of Weights and Measures, urged that the scales advocated by the sectional and professional societies should be included in Whitley Council awards, and Mr. H. F. PERRY, Sanitary Inspectors' Association, asked that provincial councils preparing awards should consult with the sectional societies. Mr. Allen replied that all shades of opinion, and other trade unions, were represented on the staff sides of the provincial councils. While the NALGO representatives would seek to represent the views of all their constituents, it was impossible for them to submit all sectional views to the councils. It must not be forgotten that the provincial council was a joint body, in which the staff sides did not get everything they wanted. Consultation already took place with all sections of the service before a scale was prepared.

Mr. A. A. GARRARD, chairman of the committee, stressed the difficulties were the staff sides of each of the 15 provincial councils to be required to consult 32 separate sectional societies before submitting scales, and urged that the societies should submit their views without being asked to do so. It was agreed to recommend this proposal.

Retention of Essential Staffs.—Mr. COWARD, National Association of Cemetery and Crematorium Superintendents, raised the difficulty of retaining essential administrative and manual staffs since the amendment of the Schedule of Reserved Occupations and the introduction of industrial registration. In his own branch of the service, having lost men below the age of 35, they had begun to train men between 41 and 45, but now these were being taken under the industrial scheme. NALGO's task today extended beyond watching the interests of its members—it should ensure that local government emerged triumphant from the struggle. Had it been consulted when the Schedule of Reserved Occupations was compiled ? Some curious decisions in the schedule suggested that it had not.

Mr. E. A. S. YOUNG, NALGO, replied that the association had been consulted when the first schedule was prepared, but had not been consulted on the second. It had, however, made strong representations to the Ministries of Health and Labour on the difficulties in which any increase in the age of reservation would involve the service. At the same time, while they would do everything possible to maintain the efficiency of local government, they must recognise that the war had to be won and that administrative sacrifice would be required to win it. If the sectional societies experienced real difficulties, the association would be happy to include their views in its own representations.

Cost-of-Living Bonus.—Replies to questions from the Incorporated Society of Inspectors of Weights and Measures and the National Association of Relieving Officers, Mr. H. ALLEN, NALGO, explained that at the next meeting of the National Whitley Council the staffs' side would endeavour to secure a bonus award more in keeping with the rise in the cost of living. He strongly deprecated the attitude of chief officers who had asked to be excluded from bonus awards now. By that attitude they were doing harm to the whole service. NALGO had always fought for a bonus for all officers, and would continue to do so ; it

was strongly opposed to the imposition of a "ceiling" beyond which bonus would not be paid. The meeting endorsed this policy.

Bonus for Superannuated Officers.—Asked by Mr. B. OLIVER, National Association of Relieving Officers, what N A L G O was doing on this question, Mr. HARROLD explained that the association had co-operated with the T.U.C. Advisory Committee, which had taken the case of superannuated officers to the Minister of Health. The Minister had declared that the Government would not contemplate legislation to enable local authorities to pay a bonus to superannuated officers, on the grounds that (a) it could not legislate for a section of the community, and (b) it was already spending vast sums in the attempt to keep down the cost of living. The report was accepted, on the understanding that the matter will be raised again at the first opportunity.

Loss of Pension on Temporary Employment.—Mr. RAMSAY, N.A.L.G.E., raised the problem of officers superannuated under the Act of 1896 who, on being recalled to the service for temporary wartime work, were compelled to sacrifice their pensions. As a result of this hardship—which did not apply to officers superannuated under the 1922 Act—some patriotic officers were making severe sacrifices, while others were being deterred from rendering valuable service.

Mr. HARROLD asked that all cases of this type should be reported to N A L G O, which would take them up with the Ministry, and in the meantime warned all superannuated officers to examine the position carefully before accepting wartime appointments. The number affected was not great, being restricted to poor law officers superannuated under the Act of 1896, officers covered by the Teachers' Superannuation Acts, and the very few officers superannuated under the Act of 1937 only who had since retired. The majority, superannuated under the Act of 1922 (and who maintained their rights under the Act of 1937) would be able to draw both pension and war-time salary.

Compensation for Injured Officers.—Mr. OLIVER, N.A.R.O., raised the question of permanent officers asked to undertake voluntary civil defence work and who were uncertain of their position under the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme. Mr. HARROLD replied that N A L G O had taken this question to the Minister of Health, seeking amendment of the present scheme to give benefits similar to those conferred under the Fire Brigade Scheme, but the Minister had so far refused to do anything.

Conditions of Nurses.—Mr. H. H. MILLER, N.A.L.G.E., drew attention to the situation created by the issue of Ministry of Health circular 2340, giving to members of the Civil Nursing Reserve better salaries and conditions than were enjoyed by nurses in the municipal service—with the result that the latter were leaving to enter the civil nursing reserve. The improved conditions should have been made compulsory for all local authorities, and not merely permissive.

Mr. ALLEN replied that N A L G O had been instrumental in setting up a Nursing Services Committee of the National Whitley Council for nurses in the municipal service. That body was now in its stride and was negotiating with the Minister, on his proposal to set up an ad hoc committee to deal with the salaries of all nurses, both in municipal service and in the voluntary hospitals. The Minister had expressed his determination at once to set in motion machinery for the regulation of salaries and superannuation of all nurses.

Blacklisting of Local Authorities.—Replies to Mr. DRAPER, Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Mr. Allen said that N A L G O had from time to time blacklisted local authorities offering inadequate salaries—but such action was useless unless members themselves would follow the association's advice. On one

occasion, when an advertisement was blacklisted, a branch secretary applied for and obtained the job; he was expelled from the association.

Redundant Officers.—Mr. RAMSAY, N.A.L.G.E., called for action to protect officers who, as a result of war circumstances, lost their positions and were either thrown out of employment or offered alternative posts at greatly inferior salaries—sometimes also losing superannuation rights. Mr. HARROLD, N A L G O, explained what the association had done to help such officers. It had set up a national register of vacancies for redundant officers and had asked the Minister of Health to introduce legislation to provide that:

- (a) All such officers should be transferred to other public or quasi-public employment at no less salary, or be granted adequate compensation;
- (b) Their superannuation rights should be maintained, and those lacking the necessary years of service should be entitled to retire on pension if they so desired; and
- (c) All should be replaced in their original positions after the war.

The Minister had promised to consider legislation at the appropriate time, but had done nothing yet, presumably because the number of officers concerned was small. If all individual cases were reported to Headquarters, N A L G O would do everything possible to help them.

Future of Local Government.—Mr. OLIVER,

N.A.R.O., asked what N A L G O was doing to ensure that its voice was heard in the many inquiries now being made into the future of local government after the war. This was a matter of importance to all officers, and they should tackle it energetically.

Mr. GARRARD outlined the proposals made for appointing a N A L G O Reconstruction Committee, and appealed to the sectional societies to assist that committee by letting it have their suggestions and proposals. Mr. J. L. HOLLAND stressed the importance of each sectional society examining the question for itself in the light of its own professional interests. He thought the N A L G O committee would welcome the views of each society. It could not ask them to sink their individuality—many might be giving evidence to the Government direct—but the fullest consultation would be valuable and would enable all sections of the service, as far as possible, to speak with one voice. It was agreed that all the bodies represented on the Standing Joint Committee should be invited to co-operate with the N A L G O Reconstruction Committee.

Title of Committee.—It was agreed that the Standing Joint Committee should in future be known as the N A L G O Consultative Committee and that the N.E.C. of N A L G O should be empowered to convene meetings of groups of members of the committee to consider proposals covering particular sections of the service.

BLACK COAT IN BATTLE-DRESS

By "MARCUS"

I AM not sure whether I am writing in the Army, on military matters or under false pretences, because, although I wear the familiar battle-dress, the shoulder titles thereon are viewed with some disdain by similarly clad soldiers who pursue a more active existence. In short, and with anonymous blushes, let me whisper that I have been embodied in the Royal Army Pay Corps. Being shortsighted, I was classified Grade III by a Civil, but apparently equally shortsighted, Medical Board, but three days after being called up I was told, in effect: "Here is a pair of Army spectacles. You are now AI, my boy, so to which combatant unit would you like to be transferred?" I enthusiastically expressed a preference for tanks—thirteen months ago—and I am still waiting to be moved.

Sometimes I have to work hard, very hard, at my clerical duties. At others, I have manicured my nails, carved my name on the trestledesk, and spent the rest of the day browsing through correspondence for amusing titbits, such as the letter from an indignant wife whose weekly allowance had been reduced because her husband was in detention. She mentioned that her husband had seldom worked in civil life, and gave the Army authorities her full permission to "make things as hot as you like for him." Other wives hear from their neighbours that someone's allowance has increased because the husband has been granted Proficiency Pay, and they accordingly write to the Regimental Paymaster irate letters in which they claim "efficiency," "sufficiency" and even "deficiency pay." Sometimes the outgoing correspondence is even funnier. One of the most glorious examples of the Army's way of expressing itself was a telegram which read: "It is requested that the rendition of AFN 1700-2 be expedited"—doubtless for the benefit of those who would never have understood the meaning of "Send form 1700-2 soon."

You may believe all you hear about the Army using forms on every possible occasion. Recently, a soldier was stated to be entitled to Proficiency Pay of 6d. a day; the statement was shortly afterwards cancelled in error and then reinstated. The man's account was accordingly adjusted, and the wife's allowance

straightened out, but not until I had addressed five envelopes (all to the wife), written a letter, sent a telegram, and completed no less than twenty forms.

Before I exchanged black jacket for battle-dress blouse, I spent the greater part of my working time dictating letters to (mostly) competent shorthand typists. Now, I write my own letters laboriously in pencil. In pencil, because only typewriter carbon paper is available, and the carbon copy is illegible if a pen is used. Occasionally I am able to borrow a tiny, three-bank, portable typewriter, and then I hammer away with two fingers at a speed of twenty-eight words a minute which would, of course, reach the impressive rate of one hundred and forty words a minute if only I used all ten fingers and thumbs.

Carefully I suit the style of each letter to the circumstances. Stern, near-rude memoranda to Commanding Officers who consistently pay men more than they are entitled to, and so put the men's accounts in debt. Sympathetic letters to wives whose husbands' misdeeds are reflected in their family allowances. Coldly polite letters, beginning with a stiff "Madam," to immoral wives whose allowances have been stopped by husbands who have learned too much about their private lives. I fear, however, that many of these letters must lose some of their effect when written on paper measuring six inches by three (because there is none other in stock) and despatched in an envelope measuring ten inches by four or five (because the supply of all others has been exhausted).

Yet the work can be fun, and we make the most of it... In this we are helped by the fact that the discipline is far from strict. How can discipline be harsh in a unit where sergeants seek advice from privates on how to spell, and even accept lessons from them in grammar? Yet the very absence of hardship in such a branch of the service makes the more far-seeing of us feel a little uncomfortable, and we look forward with some misgivings to the day when local government officer junior will climb upon our knee and say: "What did you do in the war, daddy?" And when you reply proudly: "I was in the Royal Army Pay Corps, my son," he will retort: "Oh yes, auntie was in that, too, wasn't she?"

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY—

"Jackass" On Overtime

I SEE a trifle of letters has been reaching you on unpaid overtime in the service. In the hope of converting it into a flood irresistible enough to sweep away this evil anachronism, I doff my cap and bells and take my tongue from its usual position in my check in an effort to be convincing and constructive.

There are two kinds of overtime, and it would be untrue to say it is all unpaid. Sometimes, it is recognised by hole-and-corner methods—"special grants" or "honoraria" to officers working overtime on "special duties." In a large authority it is not unusual to find one department favoured in this way while another, where much more overtime is consistently required of the staff, will be ignored. One chief officer asks for his staff; the other doesn't. Sometimes, the higher officials who are theoretically undertaking the "special" or "additional" duties are duly rewarded, but the ordinary humble pen-pushers are not.

Apart from this type of overtime, there is—and always was in peacetime—far too much routine overtime. Any officer could cite cases where a section "has to stay" every Friday night to complete certain weekly work, where an accounts department habitually works overtime getting out the completed yearly accounts and statistics, where officers, simply because of understaffing, cannot possibly do their normal work within the theoretical office-hours, where typists are given little or no work during the afternoon but are inundated at five o'clock.

It is time this kind of thing was stopped. There is no moral justification for unpaid overtime, and no logical reason why the nation should continue to have its local government "on the cheap." I know how easy it will be for "Pro Bono Publico" and "Disgusted" to revile us on the score that we are taking advantage of wartime circumstances to feather our own nests. Our ten per cent bonus as against a thirty per cent rise in the cost of living and an average rise of twenty per cent in wages is surely a sufficient reply. I know that the moment is inopportune. Is there any possibility that it will ever be anything else, during the next ten years at least?

When official staff were usually favoured with better conditions in every other direction than the workpeople, there was an element of "give and take" about the rule that they should be paid for overtime but we should not. Nowadays—rightly so, in my view—most authorities apply all new decisions impartially to staff and workpeople alike. The "give" has gone—but the "take" remains.

I hope the National Executive Council will realise that the time has passed (if it ever existed) when we could afford to give away the only commodity we have to sell—our labour. Others—professional men as well as workpeople—expect to be paid for their work, and no one considers them grasping or unpatriotic. The shopkeeper is not expected to give away produce after his shop is shut. Even the civil service have a modified form of payment for overtime.

I have never been one of those easy critics who expect the National Executive Council to do everything while the branches are content only to collect subscriptions and distribute literature, but this is a problem which can only be tackled successfully nationally. If we act individually as branches, our varying degrees of success will merely create a host of anomalies which somehow and sometime will have to be corrected and codified. Furthermore, even if the Whitley Councils have not shone very brightly on the bonus problem, some of us who want national

scales and conditions still believe in Whitleyism and want to see its machinery used.

NALGO members have never been greedy. They would be content with a reasonable scheme of payment, which would have to include safeguards against unnecessary overtime by officers who value money more than leisure, or hope by assumed zeal to curry favour and beat their colleagues in the promotion struggle. It should ignore the odd few minutes now and then which nobody grudges.

READERS' FORUM

Once again, many letters have been held over, while most of those printed have had to be curtailed. Letters for the November Journal must reach the Editor, at 192 Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, not later than October 17. **AND PLEASE KEEP THEM SHORT!**

The N.E.C. could devise such a scheme; if they say they can't, I'll cheerfully do it for them.

One great benefit of such a scheme would be the immediate reduction in unnecessary overtime which would follow. We would find that figures which were formerly vitally urgent could somehow wait a little, that much of the useless work which still has to be done would be eliminated. Overtime which is at present unavoidable because it costs nothing would become unnecessary if it had to be paid for.

NALGO rightly insists that all its members must give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Can anyone argue that it is equally right, mathematically or logically, to ask them to give a fair day's work plus overtime for the same day's pay?

If we, like so many other organisations, had held a conference this year, I would have hoped to raise this problem there in a constitutional way. Denied that opportunity, I can only appeal to the N.E.C. to ask themselves honestly: "Is there any reason why our members should work for nothing? Is it right that they should do so?" I try to look at everything with two eyes, but in this case I see only one answer. Can the N.E.C. see any other? Could the Whitley Councils, if NALGO took the problem to them?

JOHN J. JACKASS.

RECRUITING "TEMPORARIES" What Does NALGO Offer Them?

BRANCH secretaries have recently received a circular from the general secretary stating that, "A rather serious position has arisen in one or two branches where they have neglected to enrol officers engaged on the temporary staff." Phrases in the letter like: "I was instructed to urge you to lose no further time . . ." and the command: "Please do not delay this matter any longer," imply that the "rather serious position" is the fault of branches; but this is not so at all: it is the N.E.C. who are to blame for failing to tackle the problem in advance—or, indeed, at all—or to issue any advice or guidance to branches.

When our branch executive considered this matter (by the way, we are *not* one where the "serious position" has arisen) the committee suggested to the general secretary that a leaflet should be prepared, addressed to temporary officers, showing the advantages which membership of the association offered them. All we received was a curt reply saying: "The issue is very simple. NALGO has always admitted temporary officers and it offers them the same protection as it offers permanent officers so long as they are employed in the local government service. When they

SPARE TIME is well spent in reading for a DEGREE

● One of to-day's problems is that of making the best use of long war-time evenings. To those who are studiously inclined we suggest that spare time might well be occupied in reading for a Degree; not merely for the resultant material advantages, but also for the widening of outlook and development of mental abilities. Moreover, under experienced and sympathetic guidance study becomes a pleasurable occupation.

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leave the service, NALGO's obligations to them cease. I don't know what more you want."

It is nonsense to pretend that the association affords the same degree of protection or advantages for temporary staff as it does for permanent officers, and if the N.E.C. don't think so it shows how completely they have got out of touch with present conditions since they decided to elect themselves back into office, year by year, and demonstrated their firm intention of preserving local government as the "bed-rock of democracy" by instantly prohibiting all forms of conference at which branch delegates may be so undemocratic as to exercise their right to have a say in the affairs of the association. As the N.E.C. seem to be so far out of touch with things, it would be as well if someone reminded them that there is a great difference between present-day temporary staff and permanent officials. Temporaries now being appointed are told quite definitely that their appointments are for the duration of the war only; their rates of pay and conditions of service are clearly and precisely laid down and they accept, or refuse, the appointment on the terms offered. Most of them have never been in the local government service before, many of them are married women, and practically all will leave the service again for ever when the war is finished. What, then, they justifiably ask, has the association to offer them in return for their subscriptions? We cannot, of course, point to the ancillaries for the answer to this question, for they are, necessarily, ineligible for membership of the Approved Society, etc. So what are we to tell them? Do the N.E.C. know the answer? If they do, let them set it down on paper for the use of all branches.

There is a further aspect of the matter with which I should like to have dealt (branch secretaries see the second sentence of the appropriate paragraph in H.Q. circular

11 Gen 41), but I have refrained from doing so as it is thought that publication may be harmful to the association. I will be content with saying that if the N.E.C. do not at once examine the question of appointing more full-time organisers to cope with the position, they may find that the "rather serious position" of which they speak will become more pronounced as time goes on.

39. The Green, H. LANGFORD.
Chelmsford. hon. secretary,
Essex County Council branch.

LAND NATIONALISATION No Mandate for Proposal

IT is distressing to think that at a time when Britain is prepared to sacrifice the flower of the nation's manhood in a fight for freedom and democracy, the N.E.C. should have such an unpatriotic conception of its responsibilities as to enter the field of politics on a controversial topic without any mandate from the members of the association.

There is a likelihood that the present writer is not the only one among the rank and file who considers that, while the N.E.C. is engaged in a good job of work in endeavouring to retain some semblance of sanity in the organisation, it is entering a field somewhat outside its province in publishing memoranda on economic considerations such as the nationalisation of the land. The beauty of virtue is in resisting temptation. To accede to requests for observations on matters involving political issues is dangerous for the association. Moreover, the logic of being "outside politics" and actually inside when "requested" has a somewhat incomprehensible sophistry.

Whatever the future may have in store for the rank and file of N A L G O , should nationalisation of the land become an enactment, it will not only be an unwarrantable interference with the liberty of the subject—it will impose a shocking injustice on the rank and file of this great association. There can be no doubt that if this amateurish entry into politics becomes a precedent, the end of a great association will follow inevitably.

It would have been a simple matter, through the agency of the branches, to ascertain the number of members who are landowners or who have any pecuniary interest in the private ownership of land. Having instituted this procedure, the N.E.C., with evidence before it of the amazing number of members of the association who are landed proprietors, could either arrange to call a conference to consider the advisability of petitioning Parliament to nationalise the land or, if satisfied that such a proposal reflected the opinion of the association, it could, having received a mandate from the members, have forwarded such a petition.

Yet, if a ballot vote of the members were taken, it is very doubtful if a majority would favour such a proposal. So many public officials own land and have such an influence with their fellows that there is a likelihood that any attempt to rob them of the rising economic value of land would suffer an overwhelming defeat.

Lest it should be thought that N A L G O may be used as a stepping-stone for the gratification of political ambitions, it might as well be clearly understood that there are a few folk among the rank and file who will resolutely oppose any attempt to make the organisation a stamping-ground for budding politicians.

Dumbartonshire. JOHN A. FRASER.

Was It Inconsistent?

THE answer to the footnote to my letter in the September journal is that one becomes a National Socialist, Communist, or Socialist in proportion to the amount of their respective creeds one adopts.

Nationalisation of land is one of the fundamental bases of the Socialist order of society; extension of the social services is merely one of the trimmings of the National Socialist creed, and, in fact, of all other political creeds.

If N A L G O adopted a "Fuehrer Prinzip" or supported the Aryan racial theory—whatever that may be—I should certainly say that it was becoming National Socialist, and I maintain that if N A L G O really supports nationalisation of land, it must, by the very implications involved, become a support of Socialism.

This line of argument, however, savours of the "red herring." My main criticism was that, mainly because of its political implications, one proposal was heavily sat upon, while a few months later, an equally important principle bristling with political problems, is advocated.

R. J.

We disagree. N A L G O 's memorandum to the Uthwatt Committee advocated land nationalisation as an administrative solution to an administrative problem and without regard to any political implication involved. If the association is to be debarred from putting forward any proposal which has previously been adopted by a political party, then it must forever keep silent!

Action Approved

I N view of the fact that you will no doubt be receiving a number of complaints and protests—and possibly some resignations—as a result of your recent memorandum on land nationalisation, I should like, if I may, to congratulate the association upon its decision to submit the memorandum.

I welcome the memorandum as making a clear-cut suggestion for constructive action and congratulate the executive on submitting it in spite of the protests which they fully expected (I have no doubt) to receive from a number of the association's members.

24, Forest Drive, G. E. SMITH
Theydon Bois, Essex. West Ham branch.

MUST CLERKS BE SOLICITORS? Give a Chance to All!

THE restriction of the office of town clerk to barristers and solicitors is not fair to local government officers, and, more important, does not make for efficient administration.

What is its origin? The office is an old one, dating from a period when staffs were small, and the business consisted largely of drafting and executing bye-laws, administering corporate estate, and promoting private bills in parliament. Moreover, in the years immediately after the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, anxiety to avoid abuses encouraged the appointment of barristers, who as a profession had the reputation of uprightness. The practice became a tradition. Since then, the scope of local government has widened enormously, but it still involves much legal work. In particular, those who administer it must have at hand expert advice on the powers and duties of local authorities.

But how many town clerks attend personally to legal details? The direction of a modern unit of local government needs more than legal skill. Powers and duties become greater, and committees grow in number and size. Committees tend to develop their own projects as independent units. The machine becomes unwieldy for want of a directing hand.

One solution is to appoint someone with complete power over the administration, subject only to the policy laid down by the council—in other words, a city manager. But the city manager system was evolved to meet the special needs of the United States, and is not suited to our needs. What we want is co-ordination by the responsible representatives of the people, that is, by the council.

There are two reasons why the council cannot itself do the work adequately. The first is that councillors give only part of their

time to council work, and to run a local authority is a full-time job. The second is that councillors who are in office one year may be out of it the next, and cannot ensure continuity. A compromise must be sought, and it is best found by appointing a permanent official to advise and make suggestions, and to be a link between the council and the departments, without having a free hand over them.

But the legal work of a local authority is, in itself, no more important than, for example, the financial work, or the engineering. Indeed, if a technical specialist is to be the administrative head, there is much to be said for the chief financial officer holding the position, because the need for co-ordination and the means of securing it are closely bound up with finance. But co-ordination and direction are an independent function, and if the principle of division of labour means anything, it will be most efficiently performed if the man who performs it concentrates on it. In other words, the man at the head of the administration—call him the town clerk by all means—should not be a technical specialist, provided the local authority is large enough to be able to afford division of labour. Technical specialists should be subordinate to him.

In saying this, I do not mean that existing town clerks do not make good administrators. Many of them do. The point is that the opportunity of doing this important service should not depend on paying a high premium and undergoing a legal training. It should be open to all entrants to the service who have reached a satisfactory standard of personality and general education. The local authorities should take the responsibility of training them, and the training should aim at turning out men of wide knowledge and sympathies, able not only to get things done but to get the right things done. I cannot believe that the present system could not be bettered.

After the war, it is probable that units of local government will be larger. They will be large enough to afford the full benefits of specialisation of function. It will be a pity if the most important function of all is to be restricted to specialists in what is really only a sideline of public administration.

Georgeham, GEORGE SCOTT.
N. Devon. B.Com., D.P.A.

NALGO Action Urged

MY reply to "Captain's" criticism of my letter in your July number is as follows:

1. It is clear that registered solicitors monopolise the local government appointments of town and county clerks when such qualifications are stipulated in advertisements. Local government experience is usually a recommendation, but in the smaller local authority areas, the appointment goes to a solicitor who has had no practical experience of local government administration.

2. It is suggested that solicitors should be debarred from applying for such appointments.

3. The legal work of local authorities which is carried out by "the clerk" is seldom of a litigious nature; being in the main that of conveyancing and contracts, etc. For important litigation, practising legal personnel with experience in the subject dealt with is invariably employed.

4. The Law Society, the General Medical Council, and all similar bodies are merely trade unions, whose first object is to benefit their respective members. To infer that their main object is the protection of the public is merely to turn a blind eye to reality.

5. I did not expect support for my proposal to come from qualified solicitors in the local government service, since their parent body would hardly look with favour on such an unthinkable suggestion.

6. How many local authority employees have had the good fortune to become articled to a solicitor? Precious few—and since the laws of the United Kingdom are not like those of

the Medes and Persians, what is to hinder NALGO in pressing for legislation to allow town and county clerks with a NALGO diploma to carry out their duties in legal matters coming under the jurisdiction of local authorities? It is not desired that the qualification should allow officials to carry on a private practice.

ARGYLL.

"Co-ordinators" Not Needed

THE opinions expressed in Mr. Norman F. E. Browning's letter in the September journal will, no doubt, be appreciated in town clerks' departments, but the elevation of such persons to the "highest administrative posts" is a matter to be viewed with some scepticism.

It is not at all evident that the services of a co-ordinating officer will result in the more efficient functioning of a local authority. The men who are most able to direct and control the work of the departments are those who are qualified and experienced in such work. They are best fitted to advise their committees and to deal directly with the central departments of state.

The introduction of a further link in the chain is unnecessary and therefore wasteful and it is expedient that those who possess the knowledge should be in contact with those who direct the policy. It is not necessary that they communicate with some intermediary who, at best, can only reiterate the views of the experts and is unable to amplify them.

The extent of overlapping in the departments of a local authority is small and co-ordination is best achieved by the chief officers acting amongst themselves and in conjunction with the appropriate committees.

In the future, when there will be considerable reorganisation and men of vision must take the field for the planning and reconstruction of the country, let us require that such men be in a position to carry out their work with a minimum of hindrance without being at the beck and call of an administrative middleman who, more often than not, would be prone to degenerate into some pompous little ass scrawling his name over everything.

J. A. KING.

Town Hall,
Crouch End, N.8.

Down With The Dictators!

MR. BROWNING'S observations cannot be passed over without a strong protest, which I am sure will be echoed by all chief officers and budding chief officers, other than town clerks.

Since when has it been acknowledged that any chief of a department needs to have between him and the council a "chief administrative officer"—call him what you will—to exercise a general control over his and all other departments? Surely the council and the council only must develop its policy and ensure that each chief officer, who after all answers to its delegated committee which in turn reports to the council each month, carries out the council's directions.

I emphatically deny that any one man can interpret the requirements of several committees composed of different members, and dealing with widely divergent technical matters, and so control the work of the officers in carrying out their various recommendations. These recommendations must be approved and co-ordinated by the council itself.

I agree that in many authorities one officer, mostly the clerk, not infrequently the treasurer, sometimes the engineer, has shown a more forceful personality, and in time has abrogated to himself the position of the man whose word is law—and how that authority suffers from his domination! The opportunity is open for intrigues, interference, personal opinion and self advancement, and the opportunity seldom goes begging.

The town clerk's position should be in the

nature of secretary to the council and no more. Clerk means clerk, not superman supervisor! If he needs legal assistance, such can well be employed on his staff.

Down with the dictators!

PRACTICUS.

RUSSIA TO-DAY

More Articles Wanted

IT was with great interest that I read in your last issue of the forthcoming publication of the interview with Mrs. Webb and a review of the new introduction to "Soviet Communism—A New Civilisation."

Following on the setting up of the joint Anglo-Soviet trade union committee by the T.U.C., this commendable editorial step will further enlighten us on the political and economic system of our gallant and heroic allies. For too long has our knowledge of the U.S.S.R. been tainted by ignorance, prejudice, and misrepresentation and I, with many others, look forward to reading the facts by such eminent authorities as the Webbs.

May I suggest that in future issues of the journal, regular features on how local government functions in the U.S.S.R. be published, particularly in regard to the health, housing, and education services which, from the point of view of the welfare of the people and the children, are claimed to be among the best in the world?

Glasgow.

J. McD.

While we hope to publish one or more further authoritative articles on local government and the civil defence services in Russia, it is clearly impossible, in the severely limited space available, to deal comprehensively with the subject. Members interested will find all they wish to know in the Webbs' great book—and we suggest that those who cannot afford a personal copy would be doing a public service were they to use their influence to ensure that every public library possesses at least one.

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

"Hassock" Replies

I NOTE with pain and bewilderment that my plaintive bleat against the few—the few, mark you—women who take advantage of their sex has been transformed by Mr. How and Miss Prime into a tirade against equal pay, equal recognition, and the rights of women to stand in public utility vehicles. I feel sure that had they troubled to read my letter more carefully they would have found no claim of male superiority. Miss Prime's discovery of the reason for the adoption of my "nom-de-plume" alone proves that.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that there are a few—a very few—women who do take advantage of the fact that they are women. "You can't ask a girl to stay on" and "you couldn't ask a girl to do that" are the remarks engendered by their presence. The real evil lies in the fact that a precedent is established. One selfish woman in an office will prejudice the entire staff against women in general, but this is not true of a selfish man—possibly because they are more common.

"HASSOCK."

PROMOTION METHODS

Personal Experiences

I HAVE served in three large towns, and "Fairplay's" remarks would apply to them all. I have found that "pets," and those interested in some social sphere outside the office in which the chief was also interested, got the plums. It is time that NALGO members who are missing from the annual rise list had the right to report the matter to the association. I have known many minor officials to be years behind the salary scale. One high official left the annual increases for his secretary to deal with—a fact which was not discovered

(continued at foot of next column)

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(continued from preceding column)

until some member of the staff began to wonder why their applications were never successful. I have even seen highly educated men "kept down" because they did not join in little gatherings at a local saloon.

Surrey

TO THE POINT.

240 N A L G O ROLL OF HONOUR

Military KILLED

Ball, Bomdr. C. H., R.A. "A.A." housing and estates dept., Poole. Killed in road accident.

Booth, Ldg. A.C. C., R.A.F., East Ham. Killed on active service.

Bowler, A.C.2. R., R.A.F., estates dept., Nottingham. Killed by enemy action while on embarkation leave.

Branson, Pilot-Officer J. P., R.A.F.V.R., 27, town clerk's dept., Hammersmith. Killed in action.

Bulmer, Pte. R., R.A.S.C., 22, borough treasurer's dept., Darlington. Killed in action. Middle East.

Catton, Sergt. A., R.A.F., electricity dept., Bradford. Killed by enemy action.

Edcombe, Ldg. A.C. J., R.A.F., accountant's dept., Adwick-le-Street. Killed on active service.

Foster, Sergt. A. G. D., R.A.F., gas dept., Rotherham. Killed on active service.

Fowler, Sergt.-Pilot D., R.A.F., county accountant's dept., Kent. Died as result of flying accident.

Gee, Capt. Stanley W., Army Dental Corps, dental surgeon to Lancashire C.C., a son of Mr. J. E. Gee, for many years a member of the National Executive Council. Died in military hospital.

Goulden, R., R.A., public welfare dept., Sheffield. Died on active service.

Grantham, Capt. R. W., R.E., surveyor, Ware U.D. Died in Cairo.

Harvey, A. P. A., Brighton. Killed in action.

Jefferies, Major C. G. J., R.E., 35, engineer's and surveyor's dept., Woking. Died in Egypt.

Lowrey, Sergt. W.O. Air Gunner F., R.A.F.V.R., 20, borough treasurer's dept., Harrogate. Killed in daylight raid over Brest.

Manns, W. R., town clerk's dept., Bath. Died in France.

McCaw, R. W., R.N., Glasgow. Killed in action in H.M.S. Hood.

Mitchell, D., city treasurer's dept., Bath. Killed in Middle East.

"SAFE AND SOUND"

We are happy to record that Staff-Sergt. R. Stott, R.A.O.C., of the clerk's dept., Spennborough, who in August was reported missing in the Middle East, has now cabled home: "Safe and sound after a rough time."

Palmer, Sub-Lieut. R. C., R.N.V.R., Spalding. Killed on active service.

Purnell, Sergt.-Obs. F., R.A.F., 23, town clerk's dept., Barnsley. Killed in Middle East.

Smith, G. W., R.A.F., city engineer's building dept., Sheffield. Died on active service.

Saor, Sergt.-Pilot H., R.A.F.V.R., electricity dept., Derby. Killed in flying accident.

Stoodley, Sergt.-Pilot E. L., R.A.F., Ilford. Killed in action.

Taylor, Sergt.-Pilot, R.A.F.V.R., borough treasurer's dept., Southampton. Killed in flying accident.

Trumper, H. A., R.N., 27, public assistance dept., Carmarthenshire C.C. Killed in action.

Walker, Cadet Flg.-Officer D. G., R.A.F., borough treasurer's dept., Keighley. Killed in road accident.

Wilson, Sergt.-Obs. L. L., R.A.F., staff of the education committee, Kent C.C. Killed in action during flight over France.

* **Wimhurst, Sergt.-Obs. J. C.**, R.A.F., 29, gas dept., Newcastle (Staffs.). Killed in Middle East.

* Previously reported missing.

MISSING

Angel, Pte. A. C., R.A.S.C., 23, library assistant, Bethnal Green. Missing in Crete.

Batchelor, Sergt.-Pilot R., R.A.F., town clerk's dept., South Shields.

Cox, Sergt.-Obs. J. J., R.A.F. social welfare dept., Bristol.

Cox, P., Royal Marines, electricity dept., Bristol. Missing in Crete.

Ellis, Sergt.-Pilot F., R.A.F., town clerk's dept., Wembley. Missing (presumed killed) in operational flight over Germany.

Evans, Cpl. G. L., Liverpool Scottish Cameron Highlanders, libraries dept., Birkenhead. Missing in Middle East.

Hooper, R. A. C., town clerk's dept., Bath.

Jenkins, Sergt.-Obs. W. K., R.A.F., borough treasurer's dept., Swansea.

Richmond, Sergt.-Pilot H., R.A.F., borough treasurer's dept., Keighley.

Stott, Sergt. R., R.A.O.C., clerk's dept., Spennborough. Missing after operations in Greece and Crete.

Walker, Sergt. Air-Gunner J. A., R.A.F., 23, borough treasurer's dept., Dewsbury. Missing after operational flight over Germany.

Whittaker, Sergt. Air-Gunner N., R.A.F.V.R., medical officer's dept., Burton-upon-Trent.

JOHN MILLS ROSS

Miss Renée Jowett, electricity department, Rockingham Road, Kettering, asks us to appeal to any member who knew John Mills Ross O/S P/FX 84675 when aboard H.M.S. Kashmir, sunk off Crete, to write to her. Mr. Ross has been posted as missing, and Miss Jowett is anxious, if possible, to obtain further first-hand details.

PRISONERS OF WAR

† **Attew, Sergt.-Gunner K. A. V.**, R.A.F., library assistant, Kingston-upon-Thames.

Beever, J., Field Hygiene Section, assistant sanitary inspector, Huddersfield. Captured in Middle East.

† **Corrick, Lieut. R. A.**, R.E., engineer's dept., Woolwich. Captured in Greece; slightly wounded.

Jones, Cpl. E., R.C.S., collector's dept., Ebbw Vale.

O'Brien, Pte. C. N., R.A.O.C., treasurer's dept., Poole. Prisoner in Germany.

Pugh, Sergt. I., R.E., 24, borough treasurer's dept., Aberystwyth. Captured in Greece.

† **Ramsay, Lce-Cpl. D. A. T.**, Signals, 23, electricity dept., Darlington.

Shepherd, Cpl. P. J. E., R.C.S., public lighting dept., Leicester.

Ward, Pte. A. J., R.A.M.C., town clerk's dept., Camberwell. Captured in Crete.

* Previously reported missing.

AWARDS TO MEMBERS

MILITARY CROSS

Cartmell, Major H. S., R.E., T.A., deputy surveyor, Hale U.D.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Holden, Pilot-Officer G. W., R.A.F., 27, Oldham—for gallantry in air attack.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING MEDAL

Broadbent, Sergt. A. G. H., R.A.F., 24, electricity works, Oldham—for gallantry in air action.

Crocker, Sergt.-Obs. D. H., R.A.F.V.R., electricity undertaking, Torquay—for gallantry.

GEORGE MEDAL

Hallaran, Cmdr. C. F., R.N. (Retd.), baths supt., Hampstead (posthumous award)—On a very dark night a motor-boat came alongside Cmdr. Hallaran's ship to take off the pilot. A swell made the boat roll and pitch heavily, and a stoker was thrown overboard between it and the ship's side. Seeing the man in danger of being crushed, Cmdr.

Hallaran jumped into the sea, got the stoker back to the boat, but before he could be hauled in himself, was thrown against the side. His skull was fractured, and he was drowned.

CIVILIAN GEORGE MEDAL

Hague, Capt. P. T., Home Guard, gas dept., Nottingham—for gallantry and devotion to duty during an air raid in which he helped save the gas works.

O.B.E.

Partington, H., town clerk, Bootle—for marked powers of organisation and leadership during the periods of heavy raids.

Pennington, T. E., secretary to the Board of Commissioners, Gibraltar, and a retired member and for many years chairman of the Bootle branch—in recognition of exceptional public services in organising air-raid precautions in Gibraltar (where he is now chief executive officer for A.R.P.), and in evacuating women and children.

M.B.E.

Collins, J., chief officer, Bootle fire brigade—for distinguished services in fire fighting during a period of heavy raids.

Morrison, Lieut. E. W., Home Guard, gas dept., Nottingham—for gallantry and devotion to duty during an air raid in which he helped save the gas works.

BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

Heptinstall, H. W., chief fire officer, Thurrock U.D.—for exemplary behaviour, devotion to duty, and fine leadership.

BRANCH MAGAZINES TO-DAY

In the absence on war service of Norman Rogers, "Jackass"—in his more serious moments, H. Norton, chairman of the Sheffield branch, and former editor of the *Sheffield Guild Journal*—has consented to take over Branch Magazine Page. Will editors of all N A L G O branch magazines, wartime bulletins, and similar publications, please send copies to him c/o Transport Department, Division Street, Sheffield ?

Headquarters has recently been trying to discover how many of the hundred or so branch magazines existing before the war are now still in publication, and the list below is based on the latest information :

BRANCH	MAGAZINE	EDITOR
Bradford	Quarterly Review	H. M. Storey
Brighton	Brighton Municipal Officer	—
Camberwell	All Swell	David Leggett
Colchester	The Raven	R. A. Pitchforth
Coventry	Camera Principis	M. J. Miles
Croydon	Calling Croydon	Leslie Moir
Deptford	Deptford News	A. S. Lidington
Doncaster	At Your Service	J. C. Morris
Ealing	In and Out	S. M. Kenny
Finsbury	Forum	L. Cross
Grantham	Branch Bulletin	W. Exton
Hackney	Pay Day	L. Lowton
Hammer-smith	Staff Journal	H. Laddie
Hampstead	News Letter	W. J. Turner
Herts C.C.	Herts News Letter	P. J. Scrimshire
Ilkeston	The Bulletin	J. Yates
Kent C.C.	Kent County Chronicle	N. W. Bingham
Leeds	The Guildman Bulletin	P. P. Murphy
Manchester	The Guild Journal	T. G. Barton
Middlesb.	Guildhall Gazette	—
Peterboro.	Bulletin	E. Wilkinson
St. Helens	The Stimulus	A. E. Hewitt
Sheffield	Guild Journal	H. C. Crabtree
Somerset	Scribbles	A. E. Palmer
Southgate	Southgate Snips	H. J. Barker and E. I. Johnson
S. Shields	News Letter	J. Yeoman
Southwark	Staff Magazine	E. A. Clark
Spalding	South Hollander	L. Fennell
Stoke	Newington	E. J. Lovelock
	Surrey C.C.	L. A. Morling
	Wimbledon	J. W. Babbs

This list is probably incomplete, and some of the details may be inaccurate. Will editors please send corrections to the Public Relations Officer, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex ?

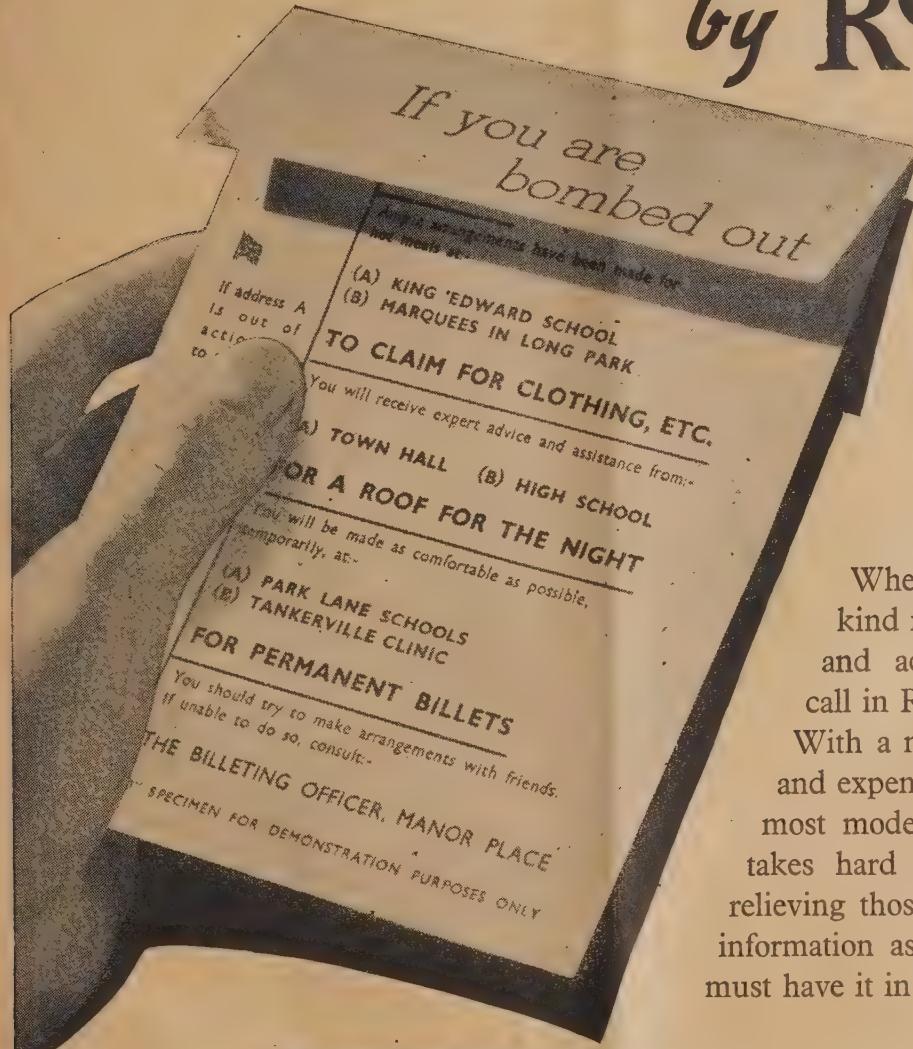
* Previously reported missing.

MISSING

Angel, Pte. A. C., R.A.S.C., 23, library assistant, Bethnal Green. Missing in Crete.

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FIRE-WATCHERS FORWARD

MASTER

ANOTHER MUCH COWSLIP EPIC

By JACKASS

THE Clerk has often commented acidly on the way cities and towns are pampered by the Government while urban and rural districts are ignored except when their services are needed—as, for instance, during the annual evacuation season. Even in Air Raid Pre-cautions the attitude seems to be that places like Liverpool, Birmingham, and Sheffield, not forgetting that unwieldy nightmare, London, must be smothered in balloons, crowded with firewatchers and wardens, and pimpled with shelters of every shape and size. Their inhabitants, already luxuriating in Andersons and Morrisons, look forward with anticipatory pleasure to each Cabinet re-shuffle in the hope of getting a Dingle Foot or an Ellen Wilkinson of new and strange design. Meanwhile, in the rural areas, the neglected rustics shelter in the pantry and hope that the nasty Nazi overhead knows a "safe area" when he sees one. If he can see up there.

The Clerk once wrote a strong letter to the Minister of Home Security, pointing out that fourteen bombs had fallen in our district, averaging one to every three houses, and asking if London could equal that. The reply was that our area covered four hundred and twenty square miles, ten per house. He retorted that all the bombs fell in the square mile we lived in, but all he evoked was a vague assurance that whatever was the matter had been noted.

We were not surprised, therefore, to read that citizens and townspeople all over the country had been registered as fire-guards, while we had not even been consulted. "Apparently," the Clerk observed bitterly, "England shall not burn, but Much Cowslip can, for all they care." Ringing peremptorily for Miss Legge, he dictated a curt note to Mr. Morrison, marked "Strictly Personal, Extremely Urgent, Highly Important, and Very Secret." He asked whether fire-bombs on Much Cowslip houses were of no importance and could be ignored, "which might be inconvenient for the inhabitants," or whether some secret treaty existed whereby Much Cowslip was guaranteed immunity. If not, he desired details of how and when firewatchers should be registered.

Mr. Morrison must have been away, but a gentleman who claimed to be directed by him replied, referring us courteously to Section four hundred and seventy-three of the Regulations made by the Minister pursuant to subsection 3b of Section three hundred and fourteen of "the relevant Act." Not knowing which was the relevant Act, the Clerk was not able to continue the correspondence.

Determined not to be left out, we acted on our own responsibility. Effective, not to say alarming, posters depicting haystacks, cottages, and piggeries in flames, called on every male inhabitant to register for firewatching, with an ominously vague threat that "such steps as the law permits will be taken against all failing to comply."

Little did we realise what a storm would develop. Hardly had the paste dried out behind our posters before a mass meeting was

in full swing on the village green, harangued by a pimply youth who had only recently come to the village as an undertaker's assistant. On the Clerk's instructions, I turned my hatbrim down, my coat collar up, and joined the crowd.

It was obvious that the orator was a politically conscious young man and too well versed in his rights and privileges to be anything but a nuisance in a well-ordered community like Much Cowslip. A large badge in his button-hole proclaimed him a member of the Union for Free Thought.

Were they, he asked his hearers, free men or slaves? Was it not an entirely new departure in the history of honest labour that they should be compelled—willy-nilly, they would mark—to guard the premises and property of their employers without pay?

They might be told that the prevention of fire was a national necessity. So was getting in the harvest or preventing burglary, but it had never been suggested they ought to act as farm-labourers or night-caretakers for their employer without pay. To compel a man to do something for his employer without pay was to legalise slave-labour. The T.U.C., "truckling to the boss class," had, after a pretence at negotiation, betrayed the workers by agreeing to the scheme.

They might ask, he said (though no one seemed at all likely to), why he had come to Much Cowslip. He would tell them. He had heard of it as a place where compulsion could never be enforced, where stout hearts and stubborn wills resisted vigorously any threat to age-long rights and privileges. He had come because he knew the Government would not dare to make a compulsory order about firewatching or anything else in our area. He

had been right, but what Whitehall had wisely avoided, the "local bureaucrats" had not hesitated to attempt. He called on them all, as free men willing to die in their tracks rather than sacrifice their liberty, to follow him to the Council Offices.

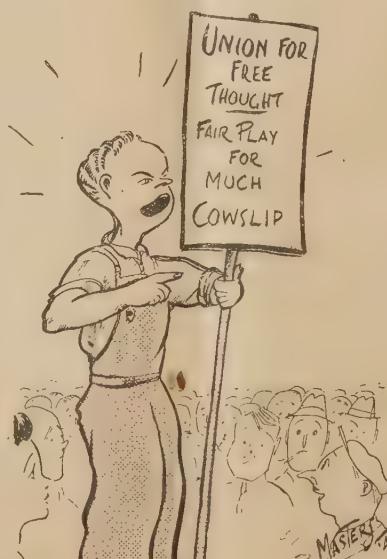
His peroration was rather weakened by a request from the Buttercup Magna reporter to have it repeated at dictation speed, but the mutters of approval among the crowd warned me that they were in a dangerous mood. I fled back to the Clerk, to find he had not been idle. An emergency meeting of the Council, urged by Councillor Gumble, who expected to hear his shop window go at any moment, had delegated full authority to the Clerk to restore order as best he could.

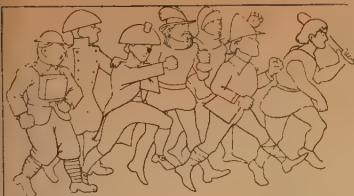
When the impact of a tree-trunk used as a battering-ram on the main doors announced the arrival of what the Clerk chose to term a "deputation," he went to an upstairs window and announced through a megaphone that he had decided to appoint paid firewatchers from among the Council staff, and that unless the crowd dispersed immediately no grace whatever would be allowed in paying the next rate demand, due out in a few days. The crowd melted away like a cinema queue after a siren, leaving only the pimply young man. Him we provoked by very rude remarks until, goaded beyond endurance, he replied in kind, whereupon our village constable—who had lain concealed behind a hedge—sprang out and arrested him on charges of loitering with intent, insulting behaviour, conduct conducive to a breach of the peace, and using obscene language. We knew that Councillor Gumble, as Chairman of the Bench, would put him away for as long as possible.

Next day, the Clerk appointed all the staff as firewatchers at one guinea each per night, an additional burden which they shouldered uncomplainingly.

Unfortunately, our first night of duty was disastrous. Blatherpatch, posted on top of a hayrick, fell asleep, dropped his glowing cigarette, and was rescued in a badly singed condition from the resultant bonfire. Postlebury, firewatching in the cellars of the "Lamb and Lion," somehow managed to ignite a barrel of brandy while trying to brew hot punch. He emerged without assistance at high speed through the cellar-flap, and it was heart-rending to hear bottles and barrels exploding all through the night while we other firewatchers conscientiously watched the blaze. Minor mishaps such as these were only to be expected while we were learning the job, but the stubborn refusals of every occupier of premises in the village to allow us to do any more firewatching on their property made it impossible to continue the scheme, to our immense regret. Councillor Gumble was most rude about it. He suggested that the R.A.F. should drop us on Berlin to give the Nazis a hand with their firewatching.

The Clerk, I am glad to say, rebuked him soundly. He said that, even in warfare, there were certain decencies to be observed, and certain things one could not do, even to a German.





Mary, My Mary!

An old farmer was laboriously filling in a claim-sheet against the railway company, one of whose trains had killed one of his cows. He came down to the last item, which was: "Disposition of the carcass?" After puzzling over it for a while he wrote: "Kind and gentle."

* * * Churchillism

"To make a speech in wartime is like asking a centipede to go for a walk with you without putting its foot in it."

—Winston Churchill (quoted in "Lord Halifax," by Stuart Hodgson).

* * * Last Lap

"When I realised last night that to-morrow was September 1, I thought I would have a binge before the invasion," said a man at a North London court.

* * * Foreign Cad Barred Hunt Ball

"Hitler is the sort of person who would shoot a fox."

—Master of Foxhounds recently.

Frankly, ever since the fellow started to bomb babies we've suspected that he had in him the makings of a first-class rotter.

* * * Why Eggs Are Scarce

"Brenda's grown to love her chickens and doesn't even like to take their eggs without saying, 'Pardon me.' —Nathaniel Gubbins.

"The British nation can be counted upon to carry through to victory any struggle that it once enters upon, no matter how long such a struggle may last or however great the sacrifice that may be necessary, or whatever the means that have to be employed; and all this even though the actual military equipment at hand may be utterly inadequate when compared with that of other nations."

—ADOLF HITLER in "Mein Kampf"



Short Story

"Will you marry me?"

"No."

And they lived happily ever after.

This Local Government

By one vote the Enniskillen Urban Council yesterday permitted a military band concert on a Sunday, in aid of military charities, but refused the general public permission to attend.

—*"Irish Times."*

* * *

He had an opportunity of talking to the Mayor about the possibility of meetings of the Town Council beginning with a prayer, and the Council almost unanimously agreed to it. Were they surprised that the season which followed was a record one for the town?

—*The Vicar of St. George's Church, Ramsgate, reported in the "Thanet Advertiser"*

* * *

When the Finance Committee recommended the purchase of 20, Sophia Place, Councillor Spickerell asked if the Education Committee proposed to proceed with the erection of an art school on that site. He thought they should direct their attention more to reading, writing and arithmetic, instead of drawing pictures of nude men.

—*"Portsmouth Evening News"*

* * *

Treasure Trove

Notice in a staff room at a London bank: "Found, three cigarettes—in a silver case."

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LITERARY

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MISCELLANEOUS

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"JIMMY" MORTIMER, NALGO organising secretary for Scotland for the past 21 years, has retired on superannuation. Here, in place of the "Scottish Notes" which he has contributed to these pages throughout that period, he bids farewell to his countless friends in Scotland—while S. H. BRODIE, secretary of the Glasgow branch and one of the Scottish members of the N.E.C., bids him Godspeed on their behalf. Mr. Mortimer's place is to be taken, for the war period, by H. SLATER, former education secretary, who is already well-known in Scotland.

IN asking me to write this little article of farewell, the Editor suggested that I should recall the highlights, grave and gay, of my work for NALGO in Scotland, and hinted that I might now, from the right side of the fence so to speak, tell Nalgoites in general just where they get off. I confess that more than once I have longed for such a golden opportunity. But that is not the mood of the moment. Already, I begin to see things in their true proportions. My prevailing feeling is one of intense admiration for the splendid people with whom I have been associated for so many years, and I am devoutly thankful for the good fortune which has been mine and for all the kindness which has been shown to me.

Before I joined the staff of NALGO, I had been secretary of Renfrewshire branch, and along with Dr. Clark Trotter had managed to get two or three new branches and also the Scottish Council established. Sir John Lindsay, who was then town clerk of Glasgow, was the first chairman of the latter body, and when the post of organising secretary for Scotland was advertised, I asked him for a testimonial. He said he would be happy to give it to me, but urged me to think twice before I gave up a permanent appointment to take up an office which might not last for more than a year or two. "In my day," he said, "I have seen many associations spring up and dissolve in thin air before many years had passed."

I told him that I had faith in NALGO, and that I was determined to make a bid for the appointment. Looking back, I feel that my faith has been fully justified. In all its activities, NALGO has grown and prospered beyond anything I could have hoped for when first I took up office. It has been wonderfully fortunate in its honorary office bearers, both national and local, and, although I "sez it as shouldn't," in its chief officers. I am thinking really of those at Headquarters, and particularly of Mr. Hill.

At the moment of writing, I am busily engaged in "mopping-up operations" and am carrying on as usual, writing to councils asking to be heard at meetings which I know I shall not attend, and arranging for Whitley Council and branch meetings with which I shall have no concern. It is rather disconcerting and not conducive to that quiet frame of mind necessary for retrospection. However, one or two incidents which come to mind may entertain, and throw some light on the kind of thing an organiser has to contend with.

Years ago, a city council had been recommended to adopt a new grading scheme, but a rumour got about that, when the scheme came before the full council, it would be turned down. I asked, and was granted, an interview. In the course of my remarks I said that the scales of salary recommended were somewhat lower than those of the worst-paying bank and considerably lower than those of the best-paying bank, and quoted figures to prove my contention. When questions were invited, a councillor asked if I would name the worst and best paying banks. When I did so, there was general laughter, which increased as I sat down in obvious amazement. However, much to my delight, the scales were adopted and, after the meeting, a magistrate came forward and explained the cause of the laughter. He said that he was agent of the best-paying bank and the councillor sitting next to him, who had asked the question, dealt with the worst-paying bank. The magistrate had urged his colleague to put the question, and the councillors,



JIMMY MORTIMER

This sketch of Mr. Mortimer, specially drawn by John R. Turner of Glasgow, appears in an album presented to him by his colleagues on the staff of NALGO.

perceiving the trick, had laughed at their colleague's discomfiture.

Another amusing incident was at a meeting of tramway inspectors. An excitable individual said that he had a serious complaint to make against me. Last year, he had been given a new waterproof that did not fit him, and I had taken no action! At first I thought this was a joke, but I soon discovered that the fellow was dead serious about it for he went on to say that the resident organiser of the transport workers took note of these things and saw the management about them.

"You're not really contending that I should have travelled from Glasgow to see if your waterproof fitted you?" I asked. "Certainly I am!" he replied angrily. "Well, then," I said, "it comes to this, that NALGO must engage a lot of tailors to go round the country inspecting waterproofs, and if waterproofs, why not the sartorial habiliments of the town clerk and all the other members of the staffs, both male and female. What a problem for the National Executive Council!"

When I was appearing before a county council asking for higher grades for the female staffs, the chairman asked if I did not think that the council, by adopting the proposed scales, would discourage the girls from marrying. I replied: "None of the girls I know." He was not satisfied with this answer, but went on to talk of the declining birth rate and the duty of the council to encourage marriage. After he had waxed eloquent about the blessedness of married life, I asked him if I might inquire if he were married himself. He haw-hawed a bit and when the councillors began to snigger, quickly passed on to another aspect of the subject.

Interviewing councils has a large element of luck in it. Somehow or other, I have noticed this particularly in Glasgow. Not so long ago, I went to a committee with one or two cases,

"Has Made Friends Everywhere"

By S. H. BRODIE

FOR more than twenty-one years, Jimmy Mortimer has guided NALGO's destinies in Scotland with admirable tact and discretion. A free lance, like myself, can always say what he thinks, but we must recognise that in an office such as Mr. Mortimer holds, this is not always possible. His parish has been a wide one, stretching from the Shetlands in the north, where we have a branch of NALGO, to the Borders in the south. Throughout all that wide area, he has made friends everywhere, and I should think there are few officials in Scotland more widely known and more highly esteemed than he.

His work has been highly successful. Since he took up his duties, the membership of the association in Scotland has been trebled, and our 34 branches now cover the whole of the country. Service conditions have greatly improved, and the association has gained in power and influence.

For the legal work of the association, Mr. Mortimer has shown a special aptitude, and on questions of superannuation, compensation, and the like he is a recognised authority. At our last Scottish district committee meeting, Mr. Fraser, our honorary solicitor, paid a warm tribute to the amazingly good work Mr. Mortimer had done in this direction, and stated that in high legal circles in Edinburgh his opinion on such subjects was much respected. I know I am speaking for all our members in Scotland when I say that Mr. Mortimer carries into his retirement our respect and good wishes and our very best thanks for all his services to the association.

some of which I thought rather weak. The committee, however, all seemed in the best of spirits. I had a law book in my hand, and when I entered the chairman remarked, "Come away, Mr. Mortimer, I see you've brought your hymn book." To all I proposed, the committee gave instant and hearty approval. A week or two later, however, I interviewed another committee about an individual case which I considered a really strong one. I had to wait over an hour in the corridor before being called in, and when at last I entered I sensed at once that they were all violently opposed to any proposal I might make. After some discussion, I got as bad-tempered as they were, and I fear we did not part on too friendly terms. I wish our members would recognise that there really is an element of luck in fighting cases, and that they would take bad luck in a sportsmanlike spirit.

I have left myself no space for detailed criticism, but I may, perhaps, briefly indicate the line my criticism would take if I had to expound it at length. It would be that I have noticed a deplorable disinclination amongst our members to concern themselves with any of the larger issues in social affairs—a certain lack of altruism and idealism in their discussions. We have in NALGO a body of men and women closely in touch with the communities they serve. Many of them must know better than the general run of individuals the actual social conditions of the people. A university lecturer told me some time ago that he was busy with a report to a certain government department on the social conditions in a large industrial county in Scotland. I asked him where he got his data, and he replied: "Chiefly from your members." We have a large branch in that county, but never at any of the meetings have I heard these men with all the data they possess discuss the social conditions of the people as a whole. Now I believe an association, like an individual, must not, if it is to be healthy, live to itself alone. "Where there is no vision the people perish." I don't want NALGO to perish. I trust it will live and prosper beyond our highest hopes.

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SOUTHERN REGION

Camborne-Redruth U.D.C. has established a staff consultative committee consisting of five members of the council and five of the staff.

Cornwall C.C. has adopted revised scales of salaries:

General Clerical Grades—

Section 1: £60 (at 17) + 10 (4) = £100 (at 21).
Section 2: £130 (at 22) + 15 (6) = £220 (at 28).

Section 3: £235 (at 28) + 15 (3) + 20 (1) = £300 (at 33).

Professional, Technical and Administrative Staffs—

Grade A: £235 + 15 (3) + 20 (1) = £300.

Grade B: £215 + 15 (3) = £360.

Grade C: £380 + 20 (3) = £440.

Grade D: £460 + 20 (2) = £500.

Above Scale D: Appointments dealt with individually.

Portsmouth C.C. has amended the salaries scales by adopting the temporary staff scales of the civil service. The council has also decided to become a constituent member of the South Midlands provincial council.

Swindon B. and Wareham and Purbeck R.D.C. have adopted the South Western provincial council scales.

NORTH WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

Blackburn and District Branch, at a special general meeting addressed by a representative of the Association, rescinded a resolution against the admittance of temporary

NALGO ADDRESSES

To avoid delay, members are asked to address correspondence as follows:

On all subjects except ancillaries, in the first place to the appropriate district office:

SOUTHERN REGION

Regional Officer (and Metropolitan District): T. M. Kershaw, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGware 2025).

Divisional Officer (Eastern and South-Eastern districts): F. Thomas, 54, New Street, Chelmsford (Chelmsford 4347).

Divisional Officer (Southern and South Western districts): N. M. Woodcock, 16, The Crescent, Taunton, (Taunton 2779).

E. and W. MIDLANDS AND S. WALES REGION

Regional Officer (and E. and W. Midland district): J. E. N. Davis, 14, Earlsbury Gardens, Birchfields, Birmingham 20 (Birchfields 5123).

Divisional Officer (S. Wales and Monmouthshire districts): A. H. Geary, 11, Park Place, Cardiff (Cardiff 1646).

NORTH-WESTERN AND NORTH WALES DISTRICTS

National Whitley Officer and Divisional Secretary: Haden Corser, 2, Mount Street, Manchester 2 (Blackfriars 7668).

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE DISTRICTS

Divisional Secretary: W. Cecil Wood, 12, East Parade, Leeds (Leeds 24861).

Divisional Officer (North-Eastern district): W. J. Upton. Milburn House (A), Dean Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne I.

SCOTTISH DISTRICT

Divisional Secretary: H. Slater, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.I (Douglas 0404).

Relating to NALGO ancillaries and the supply and delivery of "Local Government Service" to The General Secretary, NALGO, Croyde, Braunton, North Devon, (Croyde 212).

Relating to Public Relations and "Local Government Service" (editorial), to—The Public Relations Officer, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGWARE 2025).

Relating to "Local Government Service" advertisements, to—A. Darby's Advertising Agency, Cobham House, 24, Black Friars Lane, London, E.C.4 (City 6686).

LONDON OFFICE

The General Secretary, 27, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1, Telephone and telegrams WHitehall 9351.

officers into membership, and carried unanimously a resolution admitting them for the duration of the war.

Liverpool—As the result of an accident sustained by one of the food inspectors of the Liverpool corporation, the liability of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board has been brought into question, and after representations the Dock Board has agreed to waive the conditions printed on the passes (which exempted them from such liability), issued by them to employees of the corporation while such employees are carrying out their statutory duties on the dock estate.

Manchester Appeal Board granted an appeal under the Essential Work (General Provisions) Order against the refusal of the national service officer to permit a member of the electricity department accepting a new post in another department. The appellant was represented by the assistant divisional secretary.

Nalgo Examinations

The NALGO Examinations Syllabus has been brought up to date and reprinted. Copies may be obtained free of charge from the NALGO Correspondence Institute, Croyde, Braunton, Devon.

Benevolent and Orphan Fund Trophies

The three Benevolent and Orphan Fund trophies for 1940 have been awarded as follows:

"Sir Homewood Crawford" Shield for the highest contribution per member to the South Western District, which contributed 4s. 2d. per head.

"Sir Charles Wakefield" Shield for the next highest contribution to the North Eastern District (3s. 1d. per head).

"Bridlington" Cup for the third highest contribution to the North Western District (3s. 8d. per head).

Cost of Living Unchanged

The Ministry of Labour cost of living index figures for each of the past six months, showing the increase in cost of living of a "typical working-class family," since July, 1941 (taken as 100) are:

April	198	July	199
May	200	August	199
June	200	September	199

The actual percentage increase in the cost of living since September 1, 1939 (when the index figure was 155) is now 28·4.

Recent special donations to the Fund include:

Bradford—£102 10s. 7d., raised by dances, departmental collections, and special donations, including one of £35 from branch funds.

Dewsbury—£1 19s. 1d., raised by special efforts.

Harrogate—£46 3s. Od., raised by dances and other special efforts.

South Western District Committee

High tribute to the work of the Benevolent and Orphan Fund committee, under the guidance of Mr. R. T. Shears, as a result of which the South Western district has won the "Sir Homewood Crawford" Shield for the third year in succession, was paid at a meeting of the district committee at Exeter on Sept. 6. Mr. C. J. Newman, town clerk of Exeter, presided.

The divisional officer reported progress in the adoption of salaries scales, bonus, and better service conditions by various authorities.

The committee agreed to recommend the National Executive Council to press for amendment of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order, to secure that it was made definitely applicable to local government officers.

The report of the staff representatives of the South Western provincial council disclosed that three authorities have already adopted the scale of salaries recently promulgated, providing "recognised terms and conditions" in the area, and several others are considering their adoption. For the first time, therefore, it is possible to have a uniform standard of grades, comparable with other parts of the country.

On the motion of the Minehead branch, the committee unanimously recommended the National Executive Council to secure amending legislation to provide for reciprocal superannuation transfers between the Isle of Man and English local authorities.

Hospitality for Warriors

For the benefit of members serving in the Forces, we publish below a complete list of branches and individual members who have offered hospitality and entertainment for members in the Forces stationed in their areas. We shall be glad to add to the list.

BRANCHES

Ashton-Under-Lyne.—W. B. BRADLEY, electricity works, Ashton-under-Lyne (use of Waterworks Social Club offered).

Blackburn NALGO Sports and Social Club.—J. COX, 42, Victoria Street, Blackburn.

Cambridgeshire.—LEO MASON, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Cheshire County.—H. JONES, 47, Walter Street, Chester.

Essex Rivers Catchment Board.—L. E. INNES, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

Grimsby.—J. W. L. BUXTON, Municipal Buildings, Town Hall Square, Grimsby (Grimsby 55141).

Hinckley, Leicestershire.—J. G. S. TOMKINS, 16, Station Road, Hinckley.

Isle of Wight.—S. H. MATTHEWS, County Hall, Newport, I.O.W.

Leicester.—J. HILL, City Water Offices, Bowring Green Street, Leicester.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—V. GRAINGER, Town Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne I.

Skegness NALGO Social Club.—A. J. DAVIS, Town Hall, Rowan Bank, Skegness.

Winchester.—R. G. CASTLE, Guildhall, Winchester.

Wrexham.—H. BROOKFIELD, borough surveyor's dept., 1, Grosvenor Road, Wrexham.

PERSONAL

J. Darricotte, Grove House, Grove Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire (Bramhall 306). Mr. Darricotte offers "meals, bath, bed, snooker, table tennis," etc., to members in the Forces, in the area, who will write or phone to say when they would like to call.

F. W. GOODMAN, The Pines, Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire (Secretary of Bromsgrove branch).

GLAMORGAN AND WHITLEYISM

Branch Executive Vote

By 15 votes to 12 the executive committee of the Glamorgan branch endorsed the national policy of Whitleyism at a special meeting on September 6. Mr. C. B. Bright, president of the branch, presided.

Heretofore the branch has rejected proposals that it should support the South Wales provincial council. The question was raised again in June, and was referred to sub-branches for consideration. When it finally came before the executive at the special meeting, Mr. P. D. Pratt formally moved that the branch reiterate its previous decision not to join the provincial council. Mr. B. Parry, vice-president of the branch, in seconding, stressed that the decisions of the provincial council, while accepted by the staff side, were not binding upon the local authorities; that the greater representation on the employers' side of the district council (the precepting authorities) over the county councils would assist in depressing existing standards under county councils, and that the many disadvantages of the association of their county council with the South Wales provincial council outweighed any advantages, having regard to their joint advisory committee with the county council. Mr. Lewis Bevan, N.E.C., proposed and Mr. W. G. David, honorary

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Candidates must provide their own offices and staff.

Applications, stating age and experience, accompanied by copies of two recent testimonials, must reach me by Thursday, 25th September, 1941.

Arthur G. Langham,
Town Clerk's Office, Brackley, Northants.
Town Clerk.

secretary of the branch, seconded the following amendment:

"That this executive committee endorses the principle of Whitleyism in the local government service and pledges its full support of the principle in this district through the medium of the South Wales provincial council, and further will support any effort to secure membership of the Glamorgan County Council in the South Wales provincial council."

Mr. Bevan, after reviewing the case submitted by the branch vice-president, pointed out that the decisions of the Glamorgan joint advisory committee were binding on the staff, whether they liked them or not, and stressed the association's conference decision on Whitleyism a few years ago, and the need for unity. "You have no right whatever," he told the meeting, "to affiliate with a great organisation like ours and refuse to implement its decisions of major policy." The association owes its strength to its unity, and when a branch like ours, the largest, and we often boast, the most progressive in the South Wales area, persistently refuses to carry out the decisions of conferences, it should seriously consider where such action is leading it. In my opinion, we have no right to remain a branch of the association unless we are prepared to accept its decisions in matters of policy."

Many members followed with speeches for and against the amendment, until the turning point was reached with a well-timed and brilliant speech in support by Mr. D. G. Evans.

Upon the motion being submitted to the meeting, it was lost by 12 votes to 15, and the chairman declared the amendment carried.

This welcome decision of the executive committee will now come forward for consideration at the annual general meeting of the branch in December.

Obituary

We regret to report the death of Mr. F. G. Hill, clerk to the Budleigh Salterton U.D.C., and a past president of the Devon South-Eastern branch.

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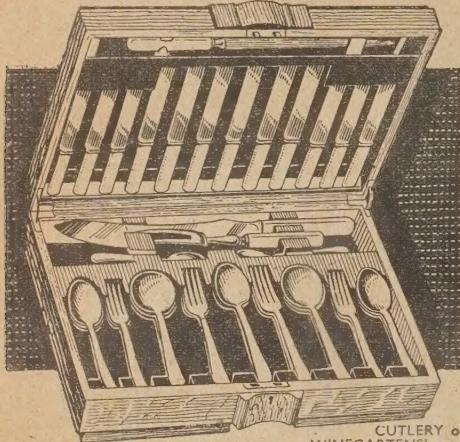
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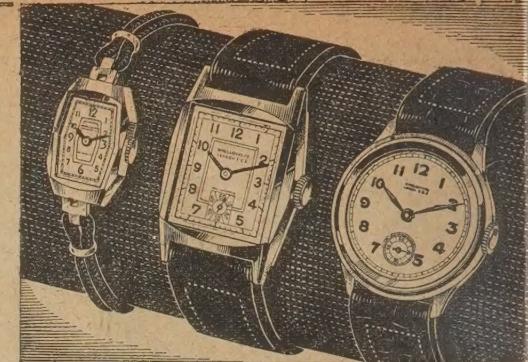
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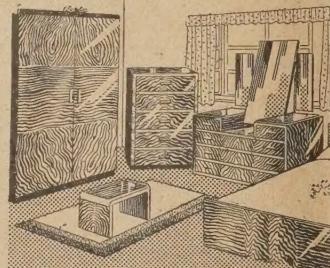
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